JUSTICE, LIKE LIGHTNING...

THUNDERBOLTS®

FAITH IN MONSTERS

WARREN ELLIS • MIKE DEODATO JR.

MARVEL

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2ND PRINTING VARIANT

BY MIKE DEODATO JR. & RICHARD ISANOVE

#110

YOUNG GUNS VARIANT

BY LEINIL YU & RICHARD ISANOVE

INITIAL INTERVIEW: BULLSEYE

WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

BULLSEYE.

I'M SORRY. I MEANT YOUR REAL NAME.

BULLSEYE.

OKAY. WHEN'S THE LAST TIME YOU COMMITTED MURDER, BULLSEYE?

THREE DAYS AGO.

THAT WOULD BE THE ASSISTANT D.A. IN DALLAS?

NO.

AFTER I KILLED HIM, I LEFT THE BUILDING AROUND BACK. THERE WAS A FATHER AND SON TAKING A SHORT CUT THROUGH THE ACCESS ROAD THERE.

THE KID WAS EATING A POPSICLE.

I TOOK THE POPSICLE OFF HIM, KNOCKED THE ICE OFF AND SPLIT THE STICK.

THE LEFT HALF WENT THROUGH DADDY'S LEFT EYE, THE RIGHT HALF THROUGH SONNY'S RIGHT EYE.

SO THAT WAS OUTSIDE YOUR ASSIGNMENT. WHAT WERE YOU THINKING ABOUT AT THE TIME?

I FELT SAD ABOUT THE ICE FALLING ON THE GROUND. IT LOOKED GOOD, AND IT WAS A HOT DAY.

WHO CARES? THEY WERE IN THE WRONG PLACE. I LIKE KILLING.

YOU JUST WANTED TO KILL THEM. IT WASN'T BECAUSE YOU'D BEEN SEEN OR ANYTHING.

WELL, YOU'RE GOING TO FIND THIS INTERESTING.

YOU RECEIVED A SERIES OF INJECTIONS BEFORE THIS MEETING. DID THEY EXPLAIN TO YOU WHAT THE INJECTIONS WERE?

A LIGHT SEDATIVE OR SOMETHING.

I SEE.

YOU'VE BEEN INJECTED WITH A NET OF NANOMETER-SIZED GENERATORS, RECEIVERS, TRIGGERS AND WIRES.

IN ONE SENSE, YOU'RE A WALKING CELL PHONE. WE CAN DIAL INTO YOUR NET VIA MICROWAVE TRANSMISSION AND ACTUATE THE TRIGGERS.

WE WILL DO THIS WHENEVER YOU DISOBEY AN ORDER.

THIS INCLUDES, BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO, ESCAPE ATTEMPTS AND GOING FOR AN UNAUTHORIZED KILL SHOT.

I HOPE YOU WEREN'T THINKING ABOUT STANDING UP, MISTER BULLSEYE.

WHAT DID YOU PUT IN ME?

WHEN THE NET'S TRIGGERS CLOSE, A VERY, VERY LARGE ELECTRIC SHOCK IS DELIVERED INTO YOUR BODY.

YOU'RE A STRONG MAN. OUR MEDICS SAY THE SHOCK WILL ONLY INCAPACITATE YOU FOR FIVE TO TEN MINUTES AND CAUSE YOU TO LOSE CONTROL OF ALL BODILY FUNCTIONS.

THE FIRST TIME.

YOU SEE, YOUR BODY CAN'T REPAIR ALL THE DAMAGE FROM THESE SHOCKS.

THE SECOND ONE WILL HOSPITALIZE YOU FOR ONE TO THREE DAYS.

THE THIRD ONE WILL LEAVE YOU WITH PERMANENT NERVE DAMAGE. NOT GOOD FOR A MAN WHO LIVES BY TARGET PRACTICE.

THE FOURTH ONE IS EXPECTED TO LEAVE YOU WITH PERMANENT BRAIN DAMAGE AND PARTIAL OR TOTAL PARALYSIS.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT THAT'S LIKE?

TRADITIONALLY, ROULETTE TAKES ONE BULLET, ONE GUN AND TWO IDIOTS.

THAT'S US.

THE TWO IDIOTS TAKE TURNS POINTING THE GUN AT THEIR OWN HEADS AND PULLING THE TRIGGER.

THE LUCKY IDIOT LIVES.

YOU FEEL LUCKY, BULLSEYE?

IT'S YOUR TURN.

YES.

YES, YOU DO.

YOU FOLLOW YOUR ASSIGNMENTS AND INSTRUCTIONS. NO ONE GETS KILLED UNLESS I SAY THEY GET KILLED. IS THAT CLEAR?

YOUR JOB, AS A MEMBER OF THE THUNDERBOLTS FIELD TEAM, IS TO APPREHEND SUPERHUMANS WHO HAVE NOT REGISTERED WITH THE COMMITTEE ON SUPERHUMAN AFFAIRS.

OBVIOUSLY, THIS WILL FREQUENTLY INVOLVE VIOLENT ALTERCATIONS. YOUR EXPERTISE WILL, IN EXTREME SITUATIONS, MAKE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A SUCCESSFUL CAPTURE AND A PUBLIC HUMILIATION.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

AFTER YOUR TOUR OF DUTY--WHICH IS DECIDED BY ME, BUT WHICH WILL NOT BE MORE THAN ONE YEAR--YOU GET A NEW IDENTITY, TEN MILLION DOLLARS, AND A FIRST-CLASS PLANE TICKET OUT OF THE U.S.A.

WHAT IF I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE THE STATES?

THEN I IMAGINE YOU'LL BE QUIETLY EXECUTED.

YOU CAN'T DO THAT.

ARE YOU A LITTLE NERVOUS, MR. BULLSEYE?

NO.

A LITTLE SCARED. IT'S LIKE THE DAYS WHEN YOUR BRAIN TUMOR WAS ACTIVE, ISN'T IT?

YOU *TASTE* SCARED. IT'S LIKE THE DAYS WHEN YOU HAD A PAIN IN YOUR BRAIN. THE LOSS OF CONTROL. YOU HATE THAT.

PAIN IN YOUR BRAIN. IT'S A LITTLE RHYME.

HA HA.

RIGHT NOW, MR. BULLSEYE, THERE ARE NO LAWS FOR YOU TO PLAY OR HIDE BEHIND, AND I AM THE CLOSEST THING TO GOD YOU ARE EVER LIKELY TO MEET.

YES.

I WANT TO KNOW WHEN I CAN KILL DAREDEVIL.

ALL GOOD THINGS COME TO THOSE WHO WAIT. ANYTHING ELSE?

I CAN DO ANYTHING I WANT. IT JUST SO HAPPENS THAT I AM NATURALLY A FAIRLY KIND AND BENEVOLENT GUY.

NOW. IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WANT TO KNOW?

YEAH. WHERE DO I KNOW YOU FROM?

EVERYONE KNOWS *ME*, BULLSEYE. I'M THE DIRECTOR OF THE THUNDERBOLTS.

I'M NORMAN OSBORN.

FAITH IN MONSTERS
part 1

CLEVELAND, OHIO.

JACK? JACK, WHERE THE HELL ARE YOU?

HEY. I'M RIGHT HERE, LUCY. NO NEED TO SHOUT.

DON'T YOU TELL ME WHEN THERE'S NO NEED TO SHOUT. I'M GOING TO SHOUT IF I DAMN WELL WANT TO.

JACK, WHY HAVE YOU STILL GOT THIS?

OOPS.

I THOUGHT YOU WERE THROWING THESE AWAY, JACK. WE TALKED ABOUT THIS.

I PUT THE BOX IN STORAGE.

I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT YOUR STUPID WEAPONS BOX. I'M TALKING ABOUT THE SUIT. IF ANYONE FINDS IT--

WHO'S GOING TO FIND IT?

HAVE YOU ACTUALLY LOOKED AT A NEWSPAPER LATELY? WATCHED THE TV NEWS? UNREGISTERED SUPERHUMANS ARE BEING SENT TO *SUPER-GUANTANAMO*, JACK.

I'M NOT GOING TO REGISTER, LUCY. IT'S UNAMERICAN.

THIS ISN'T YOUR AMERICA ANYMORE, JACK. AND IT'S DAMN SURE NOT *JACK FLAG'S* AMERICA.

YOU PUT THIS ON, THEY'LL TAKE YOU DOWN. THEY'LL TAKE YOU AWAY FROM ME.

LOOK, LUCY--

NO, JACK. THIS ISN'T SOMETHING YOU GET TO NEGOTIATE WITH ME ON.

LOOK. IT'S NOT LIKE I'M CHANGING TO JACK FLAG EVERY NIGHT AND GOING OUT ON PATROL. I JUST WANT TO KEEP THE SUIT. JUST IN CASE.

JUST IN CASE WHAT? IN CASE CAPTAIN AMERICA TURNS UP TO RECRUIT YOU AGAIN?

I WORKED WITH CAP BACK IN--

IS THAT IT? IT *IS,* ISN'T IT? YOU THINK YOUR PRECIOUS CAP'S GOING TO TURN UP AND MAKE YOU HIS BUDDY AGAIN. FIVE BUCKS SAYS HE DOESN'T EVEN REMEMBER YOUR--

ENOUGH. THAT'S *ENOUGH.*

I NEVER WORE THAT SUIT FOR CAP. I WORE IT FOR ME AND MY BROTHER.

I WORE IT FOR ME AND FOR DRAKE AND BECAUSE THAT FLAG ACTUALLY MEANS SOMETHING TO ME, LUCY.

THE STARS ON THAT FLAG MEAN THAT EVERYONE IN THIS COUNTRY STANDS TOGETHER AND NO ONE IS DRIVEN OUT FOR THEIR DIFFERENCES.

AND UNTIL THEY REPLACE THE FIFTY STARS ON THAT FLAG WITH A DAMN *SWASTIKA,* I'M GOING TO BE JACK FLAG.

I'M NOT SAYING I'M GOING TO WEAR IT AGAIN, BUT IT STAYS HERE.

YOU HEAR SOMETHING?

I CAN'T HEAR A THING. I'VE ONLY HAD ONE GOOD EAR SINCE SOME JERK FROM THE SERPENT SOCIETY SHOT ME IN THE SIDE OF THE HEAD, AND YOU'VE BEEN NAGGING ME IN IT--

HELL. IT'S THE ROONEY BROTHERS AND THEIR STUPID ATTACK DOGS AGAIN.

I'LL CALL THE COPS.

YEAH.

NO. HOW'S THAT WORKED OUT EVERY OTHER TIME WE'VE CALLED THE COPS?

MAYBE WE'LL GET LUCKY THIS TIME.

MAYBE *SHE'LL* GET LUCKY, YOU MEAN. WHAT'RE THE ODDS?

I'M GOING DOWN THERE.

JACK, IF YOU GO DOWN THERE, *WE'LL* NEVER BE SAFE.

WE HAVE TO LIVE HERE TOO. IF YOU GET INVOLVED, THEY'LL TERRORIZE US. YOU KNOW THAT.

THEY'RE NOT GOING TO KNOW IT'S ME.

THAT'S WHY WE WEAR MASKS.

JACK, IF ANYONE SEES YOU--

IT'S DARK OUT. AND THAT GIRL COULD BE IN RIBBONS OR WORSE BY THE TIME THE COPS GET HERE.

AND THIS IS ENOUGH, YOU KNOW? WE SEE THIS FOUR TIMES A WEEK, AND WE CALL THE COPS, AND NOTHING HAPPENS.

I'VE GOT TO DO THIS, LUCY. I CAN'T JUST STAND HERE AND WATCH IT AGAIN.

JACK, I.... JUST BE QUICK, OKAY? I'LL MEET YOU AT THE SIDE DOOR DOWNSTAIRS.

MAKE NO MISTAKE, TONY STARK IS A LEFTY IN HAWK'S CLOTHING.

S.H.I.E.L.D. IS THE MOST IMPORTANT SECURITY AGENCY IN THE WORLD, AND IT'S BEING CO-OPTED BY A MAN WHO HAS NOT ONLY LIED REPEATEDLY TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ABOUT HIS ACTIONS--

--BUT WHO ALSO HAS DONATED HONEST MONEY FROM MILITARY CONTRACTS TO THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY--

--ACCORDING TO THE DISCLOSURE DOCUMENTS, TONY STARK CAN QUITE LITERALLY SEE THROUGH COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS.

HE'S BIG BROTHER NOW. THE LEADER OF THE PRO-REGISTRATION FORCES IS BIG BROTHER. HE COULD BE WATCHING US THROUGH THE CAMERAS HERE IN THE STUDIO RIGHT NOW--

FIX NEWS

GIVING YOU YOUR OPINION

--*"UNREGISTERED COMBATANTS"* IS THE PREFERRED TERM, OF COURSE. LIKE ALL PROPAGANDA, IT TRADES IN THE BUSINESS OF COGNITIVE DISTORTION.

THESE PEOPLE WEREN'T "COMBATANTS." THEY WEREN'T SOLDIERS. WHAT IS AN "UNREGISTERED" SOLDIER? A GUERRILLA FIGHTER? A TERRORIST?

IN TWO WORDS, WE HAVE REDEFINED SUPER HEROES AS AN ENEMY FIGHTING FORCE WITHIN OUR OWN COUNTRY--

--PERHAPS THE MOST SURPRISING TALE TO COME OUT OF THE SUPERHUMAN REGISTRATION DRIVE IS THAT OF THE THUNDERBOLTS.

IN THIS HOUR: A TROUBLED TEAM OF ASPIRANT HEROES, WITH THE FORESIGHT TO DEDICATE THEMSELVES TO AMERICA, A TALE OF TRUE REDEMPTION--

--WON'T DENY I'VE HAD DIFFICULT TIMES, BOTH PERSONALLY AND IN BUSINESS.

BUT TONY HAS OFFERED ME... WELL, REDEMPTION.

NONE OF US SHOULD BE ARROGANT OR STUBBORN WHEN AMERICAN HEROES OFFER US REDEMPTION.

COMING UP, FOOTAGE OF THE AVENGERS DEPLOYING A NEW VEHICLE OVER MANHATTAN THIS MORNING, AND MORE RUMORS OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF REGISTERED COMBATANT UNITS IN CALIFORNIA.

BUT FIRST, THE WEATHER, AND I BELIEVE BOB HAS GOOD NEWS ABOUT SUPERHUMAN INTERVENTION IN THE TROPICAL STORM HEADING TOWARDS FLORIDA--

I'M SORRY, KELLY, BUT WE HAVE TO BREAK IN--WE HAVE WORD OF MOBILIZATION AT COYOTE SPRINGS IN COLORADO--

THUNDERBOLTS MOUNTAIN HAS JUST POSTED A MOVE TO CONDITION INDIGO.

WE NOW GO LIVE TO OUR CAMERAS OUTSIDE THE COMPLEX--WE'RE HOPING TO CATCH AN ACTUAL THUNDERBOLTS LAUNCH FOR OUR VIEWERS AT HOME.

AS YOU KNOW, CAMERAS AREN'T ALLOWED INSIDE THUNDERBOLTS MOUNTAIN--

--THERE, ARE WE GETTING THAT? THOSE CLOUDS MEAN THAT LAUNCH SILOS ARE OPENING IN THE MOUNTAIN--

--THE ROCK OF THE MOUNTAIN FAMOUSLY IMPREGNATED WITH REED RICHARDS' UNSTABLE MOLECULES-- THE SILOS ACTUALLY DISSOLVE OPEN AND THEN RE-FORM AFTER LAUNCH--

--YES! DID WE GET THAT? THE THUNDERBOLTS JUST LAUNCHED TWO CLOUDEYES, HYPERSONIC ROBOT PLANES THAT'LL REACH THE INCIDENT AREA FIRST AND SURVEY IT FOR THE TEAM--

--DO WE HAVE WORD ON THEIR TARGET?

AND NOW THE TOP OF THE MOUNTAIN IS OPENING UP-- I THINK BY NOW WE ALL KNOW WHAT THIS MEANS--

MOONSTONE IS SECURE. NEXT.

AND THERE'S A *T-WAGON.* ONE OF THE THUNDERBOLTS' FLEET OF FLYING JAIL CELLS.

A SINGLE T-WAGON MEANS THAT THEY'RE INTENDING TO APPREHEND NO MORE THAN THREE UNREGISTERED SUPERHUMANS TODAY--

PENANCE IS SECURE. NO COUNTERMEASURES AS PER STANDING ORDER, S.H.I.E.L.D. DIRECTORATE.

VENOM IS SECURE. BATRACHOTOXIN TRAPS IN HIS CUFFS ARE ARMED.

SONGBIRD IS SECURE.

RADIOACTIVE MAN IS SECURE. NO COUNTERMEASURES AS PER REQUEST OF THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT.

SWORDSMAN IS SECURE. WEAPON STOWED, DNA LOCK ON STOWAGE CELL ENGAGED, CELL LOCK KEYED TO TRIGGER SWORDMAN'S NANOCHAIN IF INTERFERED WITH.

BULLSEYE IS SECURE. TRANQUILIZER TRAPS IN HIS CUFFS ARE ARMED. WE'RE GOOD TO GO.

HERE WE GO--

HERE WE GO--

--AND WE HAVE *LAUNCH!*

THE *ZEUS*, CARRYING THE THUNDERBOLTS TEAM, ON ITS WAY TO CAPTURE ANOTHER DANGER TO AMERICAN FAMILIES!

LOOK AT IT *GO!*

KELLY?

WE SEE IT, RON. INCREDIBLE, AS EVER.

WE'RE GOING TO TAKE A QUICK COMMERCIAL BREAK. WHEN WE COME BACK, DETAILS ON THE THUNDERBOLTS' TARGET. STAY WITH US.

IT'S CONDITION INDIGO! THUNDERBOLTS ARE *GO!*

THUNDERBOLTS MOUNTAIN®!
(BATTERIES NOT INCLUDED)

T-WAGON LAUNCHED!

CLEAR THE AREA! IT'S TIME FOR--

WITH T-WAGON® LAUNCH SILO!

--THE *ZEUS!* THUNDERBOLTS ARE *IN THE AIR!*

AND AIR-POWERED ZEUS® LAUNCH RAIL!

THERE HE IS! ANOTHER TERRORIST MASKED MAN ON THE LOOSE!

CAPTAIN AMERICA® WITH "SCREAMING" VOICE CHIP!

AAAAHHH!

ALL YOUR FAVORITE THUNDERBOLTS® AGENTS!

THE THUNDERBOLTS!®
MORE GREAT ACTION FIGURES ONLY FROM MITTELWERK

INITIAL INTERVIEW: MOONSTONE

WELL, WELL. YOU'VE MADE QUITE THE RECOVERY, DR. SOFEN. OR DO YOU PREFER KARLA?

DR. SOFEN IS FINE. AND THE RETURN OF MY MOONSTONE HAS INDEED QUITE RESTORED MY HEALTH AND STRENGTH, MR. OSBORN, THANK YOU.

MY INFAMY PRECEDES ME. EXCELLENT. DO YOU KNOW WHY YOU'RE HERE?

I UNDERSTAND THERE'S AN OPPORTUNITY AVAILABLE IN THE COMMISSION ON SUPERHUMAN AFFAIRS. I'M PRESUMING SOME KIND OF PSYCHIATRIC ROLE.

IN A MANNER OF SPEAKING.

THE THUNDERBOLTS ARE BEING RECONFIGURED AS SPECIAL MARSHALS TO THE CSA.

I'M NOT A THUNDERBOLT ANYMORE.

THE THUNDERBOLTS ALREADY HAVE A FIELD LEADER. "SONGBIRD."

NO. YOU ARE, HOWEVER, MANIPULATIVE, SKILLED AT DECEPTION, AND ENTIRELY CAPABLE OF AN ALPHA-LEADER ROLE.

I WANT YOU TO LEAD THE FIELD TEAM.

HAVE A SEAT?

SHE'S DEMOTED. I DIDN'T LIKE HER. SHE WAS MORALISTIC AND ETHICALLY CONFUSED.

YOU, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAVE NEITHER MORALS NOR ETHICS.

YOU ARE ALSO USED TO WORKING WITH PERSONS WHOM WE MIGHT BROADLY CLASSIFY AS CRIMINALS.

KARLA, IT'S NO SECRET TO ME THAT, WHILE YOU WERE WORKING AS A PSYCHIATRIST IN THE OUTSIDE WORLD, YOU DROVE EIGHT PATIENTS TO SUICIDE AND WERE INSTRUMENTAL IN THE THERAPEUTIC HOSPITALIZATION OF SIX MORE.

YOU ARE, FRANKLY, A MONSTROUS HUMAN BEING. AND I TRUST YOU FEEL BAD ABOUT THIS.

OH, TERRIBLE.

HA! I THOUGHT SO.

I NEED SOMEONE WHO CAN CONTROL A GROUP OF EXTREMELY VOLATILE PERSONS.

HERE'S THE TEAM OVERVIEW. YOU'LL RECOGNIZE ONE OR TWO OF THEM. A FEW ARE NEW.

HM. THE RADIOACTIVE MAN ISN'T AN ISSUE. NEITHER IS THE SWORDSMAN. VENOM...

THE NEW VENOM. MAC GARGAN. USED TO RUN AROUND MANHATTAN AS THE SCORPION.

OH, VERY GOOD. I CAN PLAY HIM. BULLSEYE, THOUGH...

WE ONLY USE HIM WHEN WE HAVE TO.

I SEE. WELL, THIS SEEMS FEASIBLE, IN THE ABSTRACT. BUT WHAT DO I GET?

SEVERAL THINGS. FIRSTLY, OF COURSE, A PRESIDENTIAL PARDON.

MEANINGLESS TO ME. NEXT.

THE TEAM RECEIVES AN IMPLANTATION OF A CONTROL NET THAT DELIVERS AN ELECTRIC SHOCK UPON DISOBEDIENCE.

YOU DO NOT.

FORGIVE ME IF I DON'T DO A LITTLE DANCE AT *THAT*, MR. OSBORN.

THE ROLE OF FIELD LEADER PAYS ONE MILLION DOLLARS A MONTH. SHOULD YOU BE HONORABLY DISCHARGED AT THE END OF YOUR FIVE-YEAR TOUR, THAT DEVOLVES TO FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS A MONTH FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE.

AND, OF COURSE, YOU GET TO KEEP YOUR MOONSTONE, WHICH MEANS YOU WON'T SPEND THE REST OF YOUR NATURAL LIFE IN A COMA.

I'LL READ YOUR CONTRACT NOW, MR. OSBORN. DO YOU HAVE A PEN?

--YEAH, I JUST PARKED. WE FINISHED UP EARLY. NO WORK UNTIL NEXT WEEK, NOW.

NO, LISTEN, I JUST PARKED. I'LL BE UP IN FIVE MINUTES, WE CAN TALK WHEN-- YEAH, OKAY.

WHAT? NO, THE PHONE'S TO MY GOOD EAR, SO-- NO, IT'S LIKE A PLANE GOING OVERHEAD OR SOMETHING, I --

--OH.

YEAH, I SEE THEM. PACK A BAG. JUST YOUR STUFF. YOU'RE GOING TO YOUR MOM'S.

THIS IS BECAUSE OF THE OTHER NIGHT, ISN'T IT? *ISN'T IT?*

WHERE'S MY SUIT?

WHERE YOU DAMN WELL LEFT IT!

GO TO YOUR MOM'S. I'LL MEET YOU THERE.
IN YOUR SUPER HERO SUIT? I DON'T THINK SO.
I STASHED SOME CLOTHES OVER BY THE DUMPSTERS.
IS THAT WHERE YOUR GOOD PAIR OF JEANS I BOUGHT YOU WENT?
IS THIS REALLY THE TIME, LUCY?
YOU KNOW WHAT THIS MEANS, JACK? YOU KNOW WHO THEY'RE GOING TO SEND?
YEAH. I CAN TAKE THEM.
JACK, YOU'RE NOT GETTING ALL SUPER-GUY MACHISMO ABOUT--
THEY'RE VILLAINS, LUCY. ALL OF THEM. SONGBIRD? USED TO BE SCREAMING MIMI. CAP PUT HER IN PRISON THREE TIMES, AND HE'S NOWHERE NEAR AS STRONG AND DAMAGE-RESISTANT AS I AM.
AND EVEN DOC SAMSON TOOK OUT MOONSTONE ONCE, AND HE'S A HIPPIE PSYCHIATRIST.
THEY TRADE OFF FEAR. FEAR AND ALL THE TOYS THAT ROTTEN PIECE OF GARBAGE TONY STARK GAVE THEM.
ARE YOU PACKED YET?
YES.
JACK, THIS IS HORRIBLE.
TAKE THE CAR. THEY'RE NOT LOOKING FOR YOU. I'M GOING TO MESS WITH THEM AND THEN RUN FOR IT. IT'S GOING TO BE FINE.
I LOVE YOU, YOU STUPID JERK. DON'T BE A HERO. NOT THIS TIME.
OH, GOD. THEY'RE GOING TO KILL YOU FOR BEING A SUPER HERO, JACK...

COMBINED YOUNG GUNS VARIANTS

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#111

YOUNG GUNS VARIANT

BY ARIEL OLIVETTI & RICHARD ISANOVE

INITIAL INTERVIEW: SONGBIRD

WELL, WELL. MELISSA GOLD.

FORMERLY SCREAMING MIMI. NOW SONGBIRD. ABLE TO FLY AND FIGHT THROUGH POLYPHONIC ULTRASONICS. A SINGING SOLDIER, OF ALL THINGS. FORMERLY LEADER OF THE THUNDERBOLTS.

I'M TRYING TO DECIDE WHAT TO DO WITH YOU, MELISSA.

I WAS ASSURED THE TEAM STRUCTURE WOULDN'T BE AFFECTED.

WELL, THEY LIED TO YOU. I HAVE FINAL APPROVAL OF TEAM STRUCTURE. AND EVERYTHING ELSE.

YOU CAN'T TAKE ME OFF THE TEAM. I HAVE ASSURANCES.

OH, I'M SURE YOU DO. YOU BETRAYED YOUR TEAM BY BECOMING S.H.I.E.L.D.'S CREATURE, AFTER ALL. I'M SURE THEY ASSURED YOU.

OF COURSE, YOU ALSO BETRAYED S.H.I.E.L.D. BY SLEEPING WITH BARON ZEMO.

WHAT WAS THAT LIKE? I MEAN, HE WAS GETTING BEATEN UP BY CAPTAIN AMERICA IN 1944.

OH, NO, THAT'S RIGHT. IT WAS HIS SON. ALSO AN INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL OF SOME REPUTE.

SLEEPING WITH A WAR CRIMINAL AND A TERRORIST. YOU'D THINK YOU'D NEED TWO DIFFERENT PEOPLE FOR THAT.

HOW MANY DIFFERENT WAYS DID YOU SELL OUT YOUR TEAM AND YOUR EMPLOYERS, MELISSA?

YOU HAVE THESE TERRIBLE ATTACKS OF MORALITY, AND THEN... HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE SLEEPING WITH ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST DEPRAVED CRIMINALS? A PSYCHOTIC BREAK?

YOU CAN'T BE TRUSTED. I CAN'T TRUST YOU.

YOU DO, HOWEVER, HAVE YOUR USES.

THE REMAINS OF THE ORIGINAL TEAM APPEAR COMFORTABLE WITH YOU. THE PUBLIC KNOWS YOUR FACE.

AND YOU'RE PASSABLY ATTRACTIVE, WHICH DOES HELP WITH PERCEPTION. I'M TOLD YOU'RE ALSO QUITE TOYETIC.

WHAT?

TOYETIC. IT'S A WORD THE MEDIA PEOPLE USE. IT MEANS YOUR IMAGE AND ABILITIES EASILY SUGGEST TOYS BASED ON YOU.

YOU DON'T GET TO LEAD THIS TEAM ANY MORE. BUT IF YOU SERVE FOR A YEAR OR TWO, YOU GET A PARDON, A GREAT DEAL OF MONEY AND A NEW IDENTITY.

GIVE ME A YEAR AND I'LL GIVE YOU A NEW LIFE TO SCREW UP ANY WAY YOU CHOOSE, MELISSA.

ALL RIGHT.

CLEVELAND, OHIO.

FAITH IN MONSTERS part 2

JACK FLAG. YOU WILL SUBMIT TO ARREST UNDER THE SUPERHUMAN REGISTRATION ACT.

PLEASE LIE ON THE GROUND WITH YOUR HANDS ON YOUR HEAD AND YOUR ANKLES CROSSED.

IF YOU RESIST ARREST, YOU WILL BE TAKEN INTO CUSTODY BY FORCE.

NO.

DAMMIT. I WAS HOPING WE COULD JUST SHOOT HIM. WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO MAKE A SHOW OF THIS NOW.

HOW IS IT THE GOVERNMENT DIDN'T LINE UP AND SHOOT THE MEDIA *BEFORE* THEY DECIDED TO DEAL WITH THE SUPER HEROES?

--JACK FLAG. I SWEAR THAT'S JACK FLAG, USED TO WORK WITH CAPTAIN AMERICA.

GET THE PRODUCER ON THE CELL-- FINDING ONE OF CAP'S PROTEGES IN PLAY IS LIKE CATCHING OSAMA'S SON WITH A BOX OF DYNAMITE--

SONGBIRD, TAKE TO THE AIR. SWORDSMAN, VENOM, START WALKING FORWARD, SLOWLY.

CHEN LU: PUT MICROWAVES INTO THE GAS TANKS OF THE CARS AROUND FLAG.

YOU WANT EXPLOSIONS?

I DO. WE'LL TELL PEOPLE HE MINED THE PARKING LOT. I WANT THE FIGHT TAKEN OUT OF HIM.

I HAVE AN APPOINTMENT WITH A THUNDERBOLTS MOUNTAIN DOCK WORKER FOR SOME MEANINGLESS SEX IN TWO HOURS, AND I DO NOT INTEND TO MISS IT.

I THOUGHT I MIGHT GET HIM TO DRESS UP AS BARON ZEMO FOR ME.

WELL? COME ON, THEN!

OH MY GOD.

I THINK HE'S BEGGING THEM TO KILL HIM.

MOVE IN. BREAK HIS ARMS AND LEGS AND GET HIM INTO THE T-WAGON.

HELL, YEAH.

IS.. =COUGH= IS THAT ALL YOU DO?

SINCE THE TV CAMERAS ARE WATCHING US, I OFFER YOU A CHOICE--

--DO YOU PREFER TO BE RENDERED UNCONSCIOUS BEFORE I DISABLE YOUR LIMBS?

...SURE.

KKK

PFAA

HOURK HOUOURK

NGG

AND STAY DOWN.

HURRRR MNRRRAAAAAA

KRRLLLLL

AAAAAAA

NO

KRRRLLLLL

DAMMIT, VENOM'S GOING TO EAT HIM.

T-WAGON FROM MOONSTONE. NANOCHAIN SIX SIX SIX FOUR FIRE.

I TOLD YOU TO GET IN THE AIR! CRIPPLE THE JERK!

MOONSTONE--HE'S USING THE SMOKE--YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE LIT OFF THOSE CARS. THAT WAS BAD STRATEGY--

IT BECOMES INSTINCT AFTER A WHILE, JACK.

DON'T AIM AT THE TARGET. AIM AT WHERE THE TARGET WILL BE.

THE SHIELD ISN'T YOUR WEAPON. TIME AND THE ENVIRONMENT ARE YOUR WEAPONS. USE THEM.

AAAK

UKK

AAAAK

NO. WE NEED PENANCE. PENANCE, LISTEN TO ME. YOU HAVE TO TURN ON YOUR POWERS NOW.

WE NEED EVERYTHING IN FRONT OF US CLEARED SO WE CAN SEE THE TARGET, AND THEN WE NEED TO TAKE THE TARGET DOWN.

DO YOU UNDERSTAND? WE HAVE TO PUSH THIS ALL OUT OF THE WAY. YOU HAVE TO TURN YOUR POWERS ON.

GGGH.

YEAH.

NOT FIGHTING COPS. NOT YET.

NEED TO CHANGE THE PLAYING FIELD. CREATE A DISTRACTION. DOUBLE BACK.

DOUBLE BACK, GET OUT, GET TO LUCY.

UK.

HELLO.

I JUST JAMMED A BLADE THROUGH YOUR VERTEBRAL CANAL INTO THE END OF YOUR SPINAL COLUMN.

BLAME THEM. THEY WOULDN'T LET ME JUST KILL YOU.

C'MON, BULLS. QUIT PLAYING WITH YOUR FOOD.

YOU PEOPLE HAVE NO IDEA HOW TO HAVE FUN.

RADIO MOONSTONE, TELL HER THE TARGET'S NOT GOING ANYWHERE.

I JUST DESTROYED HIS CAUDA EQUINA. HE WON'T WALK AGAIN.

OKAY. GET ME OUT BACK INTO THE ZEUS.

REINITIATING TACTICAL REFRACTION MODE.

...NO, AS YOU SAW, JACK FLAG HAD MINED THE PARKING LOT. THAT'S WHY HE WALKED OUT THERE TO MAKE HIS *"STAND."*

HIS CONCEALED WEAPONRY EXTENDED TO A TASER DEVICE THAT HE USED ON VENOM--AND I'D REMIND YOU THAT, AS FEARSOME AS HE LOOKS, VENOM IS A FEDERAL OFFICER AND CERTAINLY NOT CAPABLE OF KILLING--

SO WHAT HAPPENED AT THE END THERE?

JACK FLAG HAS INHUMAN PHYSICAL RESOURCES, AND MANAGED TO KEEP WALKING FOR FIVE MINUTES EVEN AFTER PENANCE'S OVERWHELMING NON-LETHAL ATTACK.

YOU KNOW HOW THEY SAY YOU COULD STAB A DINOSAUR IN THE TAIL AND IT'D TAKE HIM FIVE MINUTES TO NOTICE THE PAIN? SAME THING. IT TOOK HIM FIVE MINUTES TO DROP.

JUST LEAVE HIM THERE. I WANT A COUPLE OF MINUTES WITH HIM BEFORE YOU LOCK UP.

YEAH, SURE, WHATEVER.

THAT WAS VERY CLEVER, YOU KNOW. SHATTERING MY SWORD.

YOU SHOULD RECEIVE A SPECIAL REWARD FOR THAT.

SWORDSMAN, HE'S NOT GOING TO ANSWER YOU. HE CAN'T FEEL HIS LEGS AND HE'S ALMOST CATATONIC WITH PAIN.

ALMOST? WELL, LET'S *HELP HIM* OUT!

STILL *AWAKE* THERE? CAN YOU *HEAR* ME, YOU *MAGGOT*?

LUCY

THAT WAS A MESS ON THE SCALE OF...

...I'M NOT SURE IF THERE'S ANYTHING TO MEASURE IT AGAINST.

IF WE CAN'T TAKE SOMEONE CALLED JACK FLAG EFFICIENTLY, THEN THERE'S A FAIR CHANCE THE FANTASTIC FOUR'S MAILMAN COULD TAKE US IN A FIGHT.

AH. GOOD. UPON THE FIELD TEAM'S RETURN, I'M GOING TO WANT TO SEE MOONSTONE HERE IN MY OFFICE IMMEDIATELY. SEE TO IT.

YES, SIR. WE'VE RECEIVED A NEW LIST OF TENTATIVE TARGETS FROM THE COMMISSION ON SUPERHUMAN AFFAIRS.

LET'S HEAR IT.

NOT MUCH TO HEAR. A LOT OF THESE ARE POSSIBLES, WITH PATCHY INTEL. BLACK FOX, SCARLET SPIDER, DIGGER, DANSEN MACABRE, PURPLE MASK, BATTLESTAR...

DID YOU SAY SPIDER-MAN?

NO, SIR.

ARE YOU SURE YOU DIDN'T SAY SPIDER-MAN?

NO, SIR. SCARLET SPIDER. I MEAN, C.S.A. DOESN'T EVEN SEEM SURE THAT--

DOESN'T MATTER. IT'S JUST--

--DOESN'T MATTER.

IT'S JUST THAT I FELT SURE YOU SAID SPIDER-MAN.

Tegretol®
CARBAMAZEPINUM

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150 MG CAP

NOT TO BE TAKEN WITH OTHER MEDICATIONS

#112

#112

YOUNG GUNS VARIANT

PASQUAL FERRY
06
ISANOVE

BY PASQUAL FERRY & RICHARD ISANOVE

WELL, I'D CHARACTERIZE THAT AS DISASTROUS.

ONE MAN. ONE MINOR SUPERHUMAN COMBATANT. AND HE HUMILIATED YOU.

JACK FLAG, FOR GOD'S SAKE. A WALKING PUNCH LINE. AND HE ALMOST TOOK YOU.

TO THE EXTENT THAT ***BULLSEYE*** WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO HELD IT TOGETHER. THE ONLY MEMBER OF THE TEAM WHO CAN'T BE SEEN ON CAMERA.

EXPLAIN TO ME HOW THIS WAS PERFECT.

ACTUALLY, NORMAN, I THINK IT WORKED OUT PERFECTLY.

WE TELL PEOPLE THAT NON-REGISTERED SUPERHUMAN COMBATANTS REPRESENT A DIRECT THREAT TO THE AMERICAN PUBLIC.

THEREFORE, CAPTURING THEM CANNOT LOOK EASY.

IF WE COULD JUST BANG THEM ON THE HEAD AND SLING THEM IN A T-WAGON, THEY WOULDN'T BE MUCH OF A DIRECT THREAT, WOULD THEY?

NO. JACK FLAG PUT UP A FIGHT. HE CLEARLY HURT US, ON CAMERA. HE ALMOST GOT AWAY.

THAT THERE IS YOUR DIRECT THREAT. OUR SUPPORT AMONG THE GREAT UNWASHED WILL DOUBLE.

BECAUSE THESE PEOPLE ARE NOW CLEARLY DANGEROUS, AND WE ARE CLEARLY INVOLVED IN A GREAT STRUGGLE TO CONTAIN THEM.

FRANKLY, IT COULDN'T HAVE WORKED OUT BETTER FOR US.

IN ADDITION, ANY SUPER HEROES WATCHING THAT WILL GO INTO BATTLE WITH US THINKING THAT IF JACK FLAG CAN ALMOST TAKE US, THEY'LL HAVE IT EASY. AND THAT TOO WILL WORK IN OUR FAVOR.

NO, IT WON'T.

SONGBIRD? DID YOU SPEAK?

I WILL REGRET ASKING THIS, BUT: WHY?

NO, IT WON'T. IT WON'T WORK IN OUR FAVOR.

BECAUSE WE'RE NOT A TEAM. WE'RE JUST A BUNCH OF PEOPLE WITH TASERS FLOATING IN OUR BLOOD.

MOONSTONE IS VERY CLEVER. BUT SHE'S NOT A TEAM LEADER, REALLY. JUST TELLING PEOPLE WHAT TO DO DOESN'T MAKE YOU A TEAM LEADER.

YOU NEED TO KNOW YOUR TEAM. YOU NEED TO TRUST YOUR TEAM. YOU NEED TO WORK TOGETHER AS A TEAM.

WE NEEDED TO WORK IN CONCERT AGAINST JACK FLAG, NOT ONE AT A TIME.

MOONSTONE? YOUR REACTION?

ANY ONE OF US SHOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO TAKE JACK FLAG. WE HAD BAD INTELLIGENCE ON HIS CAPABILITIES.

VENOM AND SWORDSMAN GOT IN EACH OTHER'S WAY. I WAS IN THE AIR WITH NO BACKUP. AND YOU DIDN'T ATTACK AT ALL.

I'M THE TEAM LEADER. I DIRECT THE ATTACK.

YOU'RE A CONTROL FREAK WHO DIDN'T WANT TO PICK UP A BRUISE BEFORE MEETING A WORKER FOR CASUAL SEX AFTER THE MISSION!

OH, IS THAT RIGHT?

LISTEN TO ME, YOU--

NO. YOU LISTEN TO ME. I PUT MY HEART AND SOUL INTO THIS TEAM. I HATE THIS JOB, BUT I'M DOING IT SO THAT I CAN HAVE MY LIFE BACK AND BECAUSE MAYBE, JUST MAYBE, IT MIGHT MAKE THIS COUNTRY A LITTLE BIT SAFER.

AND I WILL NOT SEE MY TEAM GET KILLED ON TELEVISION BECAUSE YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING!

IT'S NOT YOUR TEAM, LITTLE SONGBIRD. NOT ANYMORE.

AND HEART AND SOUL AND YOUR WEIRD LITTLE LOVE FOR THE Z-LIST FREAKS LOOKING FOR *"REDEMPTION"* YOU USED TO HANG WITH MEAN NOTHING ANYMORE.

ALL THAT MATTERS ARE POLITICS, PSYCHOLOGY, AND RATINGS.

AND, MR. OSBORN, YOU'LL FIND TOMORROW THAT WE ARE ADORED BY THE LITTLE PEOPLE MORE THAN EVER.

AND THAT CONCLUDES THE FIRST PART OF THIS DEBRIEF. TOMORROW WE'LL GO OVER THE FOOTAGE FROM THE JACK FLAG ARREST.

I WILL BE SHOUTING SOME MORE.

THE GUARDS WILL ESCORT YOU TO YOUR DOMESTIC FACILITY.

DR. CHEN, I UNDERSTAND YOU WANTED TO SEE ME. COME TO MY OFFICE NOW--YOU DON'T NEED THE GUARDS.

I WISH HE WOULD SEND THE GUARDS WITH ME.

ORDERS FROM THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT, DOCTOR. YOU ARE NOT TO BE TREATED AS A CRIMINAL.

SIT, SIT.

IT LOOKS BAD TO MY FELLOW TEAM MEMBERS.

I CAN SPEAK TO THE CHINESE. NOW, HOW MAY I HELP YOU?

I DISLIKE IT.

NOW, THAT WAS AGREED TO BY YOUR GOVERNMENT.

I UNDERSTAND THAT. I DO NOT UNDERSTAND WHY THIS SUIT LOOKS AS IT DOES.

I WANT YOU TO IMAGINE YOURSELF AS AN ORDINARY AMERICAN, CHEN.

YOU DON'T HAVE A PASSPORT. YOU'VE NEVER BEEN OUTSIDE THE CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES.

YOU THINK HOLLYWOOD IS LIBERAL. YOU DISTRUST ANYONE WHO ISN'T CHRISTIAN.

YOUR KIDS ARE MAKING BOMBS IN THE BASEMENT WHILE YOU WATCH REALITY ON TV. YOU THINK THERE WERE WMD'S IN IRAQ AND YOU THINK NORTH KOREA COULD NUKE HOBOKEN. YES?

TM

PUT YOURSELF IN THAT MIND: THEN LOOK AT A GIANT RADIOACTIVE CHINESE MAN BEATING UP WHITE AMERICAN SUPER HEROES.

I BELIEVE THAT IS WHAT MY GOVERNMENT ENJOYS ABOUT THE SITUATION.

I'M SURE THEY DO. BUT IT PRESENTS US POLITICAL AND IMAGE PROBLEMS.

ALSO, FOCUS GROUPS TOLD US THEY CONSIDERED YOUR PREVIOUS UNIFORMS BORDERING ON THE OBSCENE.

ONE OF THEM ACTUALLY SAID, *"WHY IS THE GREEN DUDE WEARING A DIAPER?"*

"...UH?"

I'M NOT GOING TO SAY THE WORD HE ACTUALLY USED.

ULTIMATELY, YOU APPEAR TO AMERICANS TO BE A RADIOACTIVE FOREIGNER RUNNING AROUND THE COUNTRY STERILIZING EVERYTHING YOU LOOK AT.

THE UNIFORM IS PURELY FOR SHOW. IT BLURS YOUR RACIAL FEATURES A LITTLE, AND APPEARS TO CONTAIN WHATEVER RADIOACTIVITY PEOPLE BELIEVE YOU ARE LEAKING.

WOULD IT NOT BE MORE EFFECTIVE TO SIMPLY EDUCATE YOUR PEOPLE AS TO MY CONDITION?

EDUCATE THEM? SEE, THAT'S FOREIGNERS' TALK.

JOKE.

FOR THE MOMENT, DOCTOR, YOU'LL HAVE TO ENDURE THE SUIT. WE'RE GOING TO KEEP UP THE FOCUS TESTING, AND WILL CHANGE IT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, OKAY?

WAS THERE ANYTHING ELSE?

SONGBIRD SHOULD BE LEADING THE TEAM.

I DISAGREE.

SHE UNDERSTANDS US. THE [illegible] MEMBERS. AND IS [illegible] ENOUGH TO UNDERSTAND THE REST.

DO YOU TRUST HER?

[illegible] IS IRRELEVANT.

DO YOU TRUST HER?

I BE[illegible]VE IN HER ABILITY IN THE FIELD.

THAT'S NOT AN ANSWER, DOCTOR.

SONGBIRD MELISSA'S A TROUBLED WOMAN. HER HEART LEADS HER INTO DIFFICULT GROUND.

AND THAT'S WHY SHE'S NOT LEADING THE TEAM. HEART HAS NO PLACE HERE.

COURAGE, DOCTOR. A YEAR PASSES QUICKLY. SOON, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO GO HOME AGAIN. MAYBE YOUR PEOPLE CAN THROW AWAY THEIR TANKS AND SEND YOU INTO TIANANMEN SQUARE INSTEAD.

JOKE. REALLY.

LET ME HAVE THAT LIST AGAIN.

SIR.

HM.

HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA

EENY, MEENY, MINEY, MO...HA HA HA.

HEH. HA HA HA HA HA.

HRM.

OKAY.

GET ME THE COMMISSION ON SUPERHUMAN AFFAIRS ON THE PHONE.

TIME TO APPROVE THE NEXT TARGET.

SF NET

TONIGHT AT 8 ON THE SF NET: *WHO WANTS TO BE A THUNDERBOLT?*

WITH STAN LEE!

THAT'S RIGHT, TRUE BELIEVERS! THE THUNDERBOLTS HAVE OPENED A TRAINING PROGRAM FOR A SECOND BACKUP TEAM, AND WE'RE OFFERING ORDINARY AMERICANS THE CHANCE TO FIGHT EVIL!

HIDING DOWN THERE IN INSURGENCY TOWN ARE CAPTAIN AMERICA, THE FALCON AND OTHER ROGUE SUPERHUMANS.

OUR CONTESTANTS HAVE JUST ONE DAY TO DEVISE THEIR SUPER HERO IDENTITIES AND POWER GEAR BEFORE GOING INTO INSURGENCY TOWN TO TRY AND TAKE THEM OUT.

WHOEVER WINS TODAY'S CONTEST GOES INTO THE SEMIFINALS, COMPETING AGAINST PREVIOUS WEEKS' WINNERS SUCH AS STABBITY JONES

AND HIS KNIFE-SUIT!

HELLFANG'S FLAMETHROWER MASK!

DOOMSTOMP AND HIS GASOLINE-POWERED DEATH BOOTS!

DON'T *YOU* WANT TO BE OUT ON THE STREETS OF AMERICA, CLEANING UP EVIL? *WHO WANTS TO BE A THUNDERBOLT?*-- TONIGHT AT 8!

EXCELSIOR!

I THINK THE QUESTION TO BE ASKED OF THE THUNDERBOLTS IS-- WHY *AREN'T* THEY USING EXCESSIVE FORCE?

JACK FLAG MINED A BIG APARTMENT BUILDING'S PARKING LOT. ISN'T THAT ARGUMENT ENOUGH FOR JUST TAKING HIM OUT?

DO WE ASK OUR BOYS IN IRAQ TO SHOOT FOR THE KNEES? NO. WHY SHOULDN'T WE JUST KILL ANTI-GOVERNMENT COMBATANTS HERE?

FREE FIRE

IT'S IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND THAT THIS SITUATION ISN'T JUST A DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN CAPTAIN AMERICA AND IRON MAN. THIS ISN'T AN INTERNAL THING TO THE SUPERHUMAN COMMUNITY.

UNREGISTERED SUPERHUMANS ARE DEFYING THE RULE OF LAW. THEY ARE IN FACT TELLING THE GOVERNMENT THAT THEY'LL DO WHAT THEY LIKE.

FREE FIRE

CAN WE ALLOW SUPERHUMANS TO SIMPLY IGNORE HUMAN GOVERNMENT WHEN THEY DON'T LIKE WHAT THEY'RE BEING TOLD?

HOW BIG A STEP IS IT FROM THERE TO HUMANOID WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION SIMPLY DECIDING IT'S EASIER TO TAKE OVER OR JUST DESTROY OUR GOVERNMENT?

FREE FIRE

THE PRESIDENT IS INDEED AWARE OF NORMAN OSBORN'S TROUBLES IN THE PAST.

THE PRESIDENT HAD HIS OWN TROUBLES IN THE PAST. HE SURMOUNTED THEM THROUGH FAITH AND HARD WORK.

HE'S NOT GOING TO DENY A GOOD, SMART GUY WHO LOVES HIS COUNTRY LIKE NORMAN OSBORN THE SAME CHANCE. NEXT QUESTION.

WHITE HOUSE PRESS CONFERENCE

WHAT WENT WRONG? WHEN DID WE DECIDE TO HIRE MURDERERS IN COSTUMES TO BE A SUPERHUMAN GESTAPO?

WE HAVE REACHED THAT FRIGHTENING POINT WHERE WE APPLAUD MASKED POLICE BEATING THE POLITICALLY INCONVENIENT IN THE STREET AND THEN DISAPPEARING THEM.

WHO'S NEXT, YOU MAY ASK? WHO IS AT THE END OF THEIR LONG LIST?

FIX NEWS GIVING YOU YOUR OPINION

THE ANSWER IS SIMPLE: YOU AND I.

GOOD NIGHT, AND GOOD LUCK. YOU MAY NEED IT.

FIX NEWS GIVING YOU YOUR OPINION

MISTER GARGAN.

HOW ARE YOU FEELING?

COLD.

IT'S WEIRD. THE VENOM SYMBIOTE IS ALWAYS WARM. ALWAYS.

YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT IT'S LIKE. I CAN ALWAYS FEEL ITS WEIGHT IN ME, IN MY GUT, BUT I'M ALWAYS HUNGRY.

SOMETIMES I FEEL IT MOVING, AND I WANT TO PUKE, BUT I CAN'T PUKE IT UP.

YOU SHOULD BE USED TO ENHANCEMENTS. YOU RAN AROUND IN A COMBAT SUIT WITH A MECHANICAL TAIL AS THE SCORPION FOR YEARS.

IT WASN'T LIKE THIS. EVEN THE ACCIDENTS WITH THE SUIT, THE TAIL...NEVER LIKE THIS.

SO DAMN COLD WHEN IT'S INSIDE ME. IT'S HORRIBLE.

DO YOU WANT OUT, MAC?

NO. SOMETIMES I CAN'T BELIEVE I EVER GOT MYSELF INTO THIS.

AND SOMETIMES I CAN'T BELIEVE I LIVED THIS LONG WITHOUT IT.

YOU KNOW WHAT I DO IN HERE?

I THINK ABOUT KILLING PEOPLE. OBVIOUSLY. STUPID QUESTION.

ONCE I GOT CAUGHT ON CAMERA KILLING PEOPLE, AND SOME DUMB REPORTER CAME TO RYKER'S WITH HER DUMB CAMERA CREW AND ASKED ME WHY I WAS SMILING.

I DON'T JUST LIKE IT. I'M NOT JUST GOOD AT IT. I'M NOT GOING TO TELL YOU IT'S MY ART FORM OR SOME CRAP LIKE THAT.

WHEN I KILL SOMEONE, I GET STRONGER.

MY HEAD GOES LIGHT. ALL THE WEIGHT DROPS AWAY FROM ME. MY HEART RUNS FASTER.

AND THERE'S NO STRAIN. EVERYTHING BECOMES SWEET AND EASY. I'M STRONGER, FASTER.

THERE'S NO GRAVITY. I CAN SEE FURTHER. I KNOW EVERYTHING.

EVERY TIME I KILL SOMEONE, I BECOME MORE LIKE GOD.

CAN YOU IMAGINE?

HE CREATES, I TAKE AWAY.

MAYBE THAT'S THE SECRET OF RELIGION, RIGHT? MAYBE I'M THE NEW GOD. MAYBE KILLING AS FAST AS HE CREATES MAKES ME GOD'S ONLY FRIEND.

WHAT A THOUGHT, HUH?

I THINK BULLSEYE CAN SKIP TOILET BREAKS FOR THE NEXT TWENTY-FOUR HOURS, DON'T YOU?

YESSIR.

THE APARTMENT OF JILLIAN WOODS.

MRR.

MFF.

NOON. OH MAN.

HEY.

MORNING. OR AFTERNOON, I GUESS.

JILLIAN, RIGHT?

RIGHT.

SORRY. DUMB THING TO SAY. GOT PRETTY HAMMERED LAST NIGHT.

YEAH.

HEY, I WASN'T TOO HAMMERED TO... YOU KNOW. WAS I?

RELAX. IT WAS ONLY YOUR BRAIN THAT TURNED OFF.

THANK GOODNESS. I'M PRETTY DUMB WHEN MY BRAIN'S ON, AS YOU CAN PROBABLY TELL.

NO WONDER I MADE A GOOD FIRST IMPRESSION.

HEH.

LISTEN, I DON'T WANNA BE A JERK, BUT I'VE GOT A JOB INTERVIEW AT TWO, AND IT'S NOON ALREADY.

HEY, IT'S NO PROBLEM. HOW ABOUT I FIND YOUR COFFEE AND MAKE YOU A CUP?

YOU KNOW, AS SOON AS I CAN FEEL MY LEGS.

THAT'S SWEET. I'D LIKE THAT, THANKS.

(I WISH I COULD REMEMBER YOUR NAME.)

WHAT TO WEAR, WHAT TO WEAR...

THE NAVAJO RESERVATION.

I MUST'VE BEEN CRAZY.

HELL, I MUST'VE LOOKED LIKE I WAS ABOUT TO BREAK INTO THE CHORUS OF "YMCA."

DIFFERENT TIMES, JASON.

THIS ISN'T THE SUIT YOU WORE BACK IN THE SPRING, THOUGH. WHERE'S THE BEER?

BEHIND THE GAS CANS.

AND THAT SUIT GOT TRASHED BY WHATSISNAME. THAT DRUNKEN PIECE OF--

BOBBY LAME WOLF FROM OFF THE RESERVATION?

YEAH, BUT HE HAD A NAME. HE FOUND THAT CRAZY OLD IRON MAN KNOCK-OFF SUIT, THE BLUE THING...THE COBALT MAN SUIT, THAT WAS IT.

COBALT TOMAHAWK!

YES! HA!

"I'M GOING TO KILL EVERYONE IN THIS CASINO UNLESS YOU GIVE ME ALL THE WHISKY AND MAKE MY GIRLFRIEND LOVE ME AGAIN!"

BUTTHEAD.

SO WHAT'RE YOU LOOKING AT THE VILLAGE PEOPLE COSTUME FOR?

I DUNNO. THIS WHOLE REGISTRATION THING RUBS ME THE WRONG WAY.

I DUNNO. YOU COULD PROBABLY GET PAID FOR THE WHOLE AMERICAN EAGLE THING IF YOU SIGNED UP.

BUT IF I WERE YOU? I'D BURN THE DAMN THING AND LIVE TO A RIPE OLD AGE.

HELL. I SHOULDN'T BE TRYING TO INFLUENCE YOU. YOU DO WHAT YOU WANT.

NO, GO ON. I WANT TO KNOW IF YOU'RE THINKING WHAT I'M THINKING.

YOUR SKIN'S THE WRONG COLOR TO SIGN UP, MAN.

NO COINCIDENCE THAT IT WAS THE BIGGEST BLACK GUY IN THE WORLD WHO THEY CHOSE TO KILL FIRST, YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN?

YOU WANT TO GO TO WASHINGTON AND SAY, I'M THE INJUN WHO CAN KICK THE CHEESE OUT OF IRON MAN WITHOUT BREAKING A SWEAT, AND I'M HERE FOR SOME OF THAT SWEET FEDERAL MONEY?

TELL YOU WHAT: I'LL COME WITH YOU, AND SEE IF THEY'LL DO ME MY FORTY ACRES AND MY DAMN MULE WHILE THEY'RE AT IT.

YEAH.

JUST MY OPINION, JASE. BUT THIS AIN'T SUPER HERO REGISTRATION. THIS IS MAKING THE SKIES SAFE FOR FLYING WHITEY.

YEAH.

SO WHAT ARE YOU THINKING?

WHAT AM I THINKING, STEVE?

I'M THINKING ABOUT SHOVING THEIR REGISTRATION RIGHT UP THEIR BACKSIDES.

FIRST NATIONAL SAVINGS & TRUST TOWER.

PLEASE, JUST GIVE ME A MINUTE. MY-MY HANDS ARE SHAKING.

I UNDERSTAND. BUT WE NEED TO MOVE QUICKLY. WE ONLY HAVE TEN MINUTES BEFORE THE NEXT SECURITY SWEEP.

THE HELL WITH THIS. KILL HIM AND TAKE THE KEYS.

WE AGREED THIS WOULD BE EASIER. WE'RE MAKING A STATEMENT, NOT KILLING OUT OF HAND.

AND I SAID WE'RE PLANTING A BOMB, AND BEING WORRIED ABOUT COLLATERAL DEATH IS NOT ONLY STUPID, BUT--

I'VE GOT IT. HOLD ON.

THERE. NOW YOU'LL LET ME GO, RIGHT?

DON'T WORRY. WE'RE GOING TO HOLD YOU UNTIL THE DEVICE GOES OFF, AND THEN LET YOU GO.

THAT'S RIGHT. NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.

EEEYAAAAAH

BACK AWAY FROM THAT MAN! NOW!

WHEN THE POLICE COME FOR YOU, YOU *TELL* THEM! ARE YOU *LISTENING* TO ME? YOU *TELL* THEM!

YOU TELL THEM *THE STEEL SPIDER'S* STILL OUT HERE!

...SO, YES, THAT'S FINAL.

I'LL BE COMMITTING THE TEAM WITHIN THE NEXT 24 HOURS.

YES. THANK YOU. GOODBYE.

OH, YES.

THE STEEL SPIDER.

MAN.

STEEL SPIDER, MAN.

NO. STEEL SPIDER. THE STEEL SPIDER.

THE STEEL SPIDER MAN.

STEEL. SPIDER. MAN.

SPIDER. MAN. HEH.

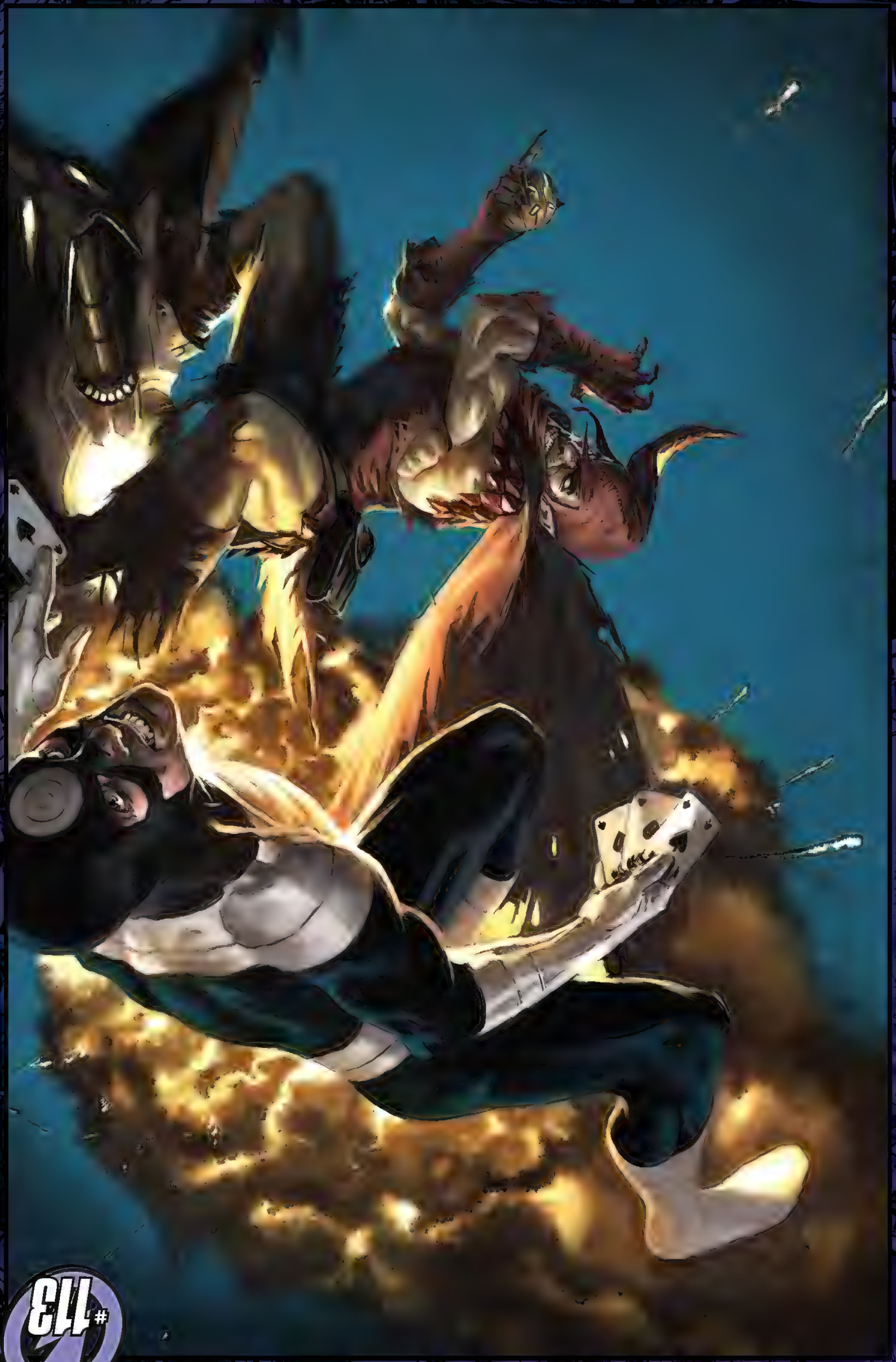
SPIDER. MAN. SPIDER-MAN. HEH.

SPIDER-MAN. SPIDER-MAN. OH GOD.

HEH. SPIDER-MAN. HEH. HA. HA HA HA HA.

HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA

FAITH IN MONSTERS part 3



#113

YOUNG GUNS VARIANT

BY BILLY TAN & RICHARD ISANOVE

THE HOME OF OLIVER OSNICK.

PFFFF

NNF.

OW.
DAMN.

BEEEEEP

MR. OSNICK, THIS IS DEAN CRANE, FROM PHOENIX PREMIER BANK. I'D APPRECIATE IT IF YOU COULD RETURN ONE OF MY CALLS DURING OFFICE HOURS AT 555-9102, EXTENSION 211.

I'M AFRAID I MUST INSIST ON AN URGENT DISCUSSION REGARDING YOUR EXPENDITURES.

BEEEEEP

OLIVER? OLIVER, PICK UP. WE'VE HAD SOME ELECTRONIC GOODS CHARGED TO OUR ACCOUNT AGAIN. I KNOW IT'S YOU.

FOR GOD'S SAKE, OLIVER. I'M NOT AN IDIOT. I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING. CALL ME BACK, SON.

BEEEEEP

OLLIE. IT'S SANDRA.

I'M JUST... I'M JUST CALLING, OKAY? CALL ME AFTER YOU'VE SLEPT. JUST LEAVE A MESSAGE TO LET ME KNOW YOU'RE STILL...

...ALIVE.

NO. I TAKE IT BACK. DON'T CALL ME. I TOLD YOU I'M NOT GOING TO LIVE LIKE THIS. I DON'T CARE ABOUT SPIDER-MAN OR CAPTAIN AMERICA OR ANY OF THAT STUFF. IT'S NOT IMPORTANT TO ME.

ONLY YOU WERE. BUT YOU'RE DOING THIS. AND I CAN'T...

KLIK

THUNDERBOLTS MOUNTAIN.

HELLO, ROBBIE.

YOU ARE ALLOWED FURNITURE, YOU KNOW.

DON'T NEED IT.

ROBBIE, HONESTLY. YOU UNDERSTAND YOU'RE HERE UNDER SPECIAL CONDITIONS. THERE'S NO REASON FOR YOU TO LIVE LIKE A PRISONER.

I'M HERE TO DO A JOB. I'M NOT HERE TO RELAX.

PERHAPS I COULD GET YOU A HAIR SHIRT? FIND SOME BROKEN GLASS TO PUT IN YOUR SLIPPERS?

LOOK AT THE STATE OF YOU, BOY.

MOONSTONE THINKS YOU HESITATED IN THE FIELD. BUT I DON'T THINK SO. I THINK THE CONSTANT PAIN MAKES IT DIFFICULT FOR YOU TO CONCENTRATE.

LOOK AT THAT SUIT. I'VE SEEN SOME THINGS IN MY TIME, BOY, BUT A WALKING IRON MAIDEN IS SOMETHING NEW TO ME. I DON'T SEE HOW YOU CAN POSSIBLY FUNCTION--

YOU'RE WRONG.

THE PAIN HELPS ME TO THINK. IT BRINGS EVERYTHING INTO FOCUS.

THE PAIN... IT'S THE ONLY TIME THE WORLD'S IN COLOR.

THE REST OF THE TIME? EVERYTHING'S JUST FLAT AND GRAY.

THIS WOULD BE WHERE WE WHEEL INTO A ROUSING CHORUS OF *"I'M NOT OKAY,"* I SUPPOSE.

ROBBIE, THE C.S.A. MADE YOU MY RESPONSIBILITY. THEY CARE ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS TO YOU. SO DO I.

AND I THINK THE PENANCE SUIT IS EITHER GOING TO KILL YOU OR GET YOU KILLED.

I'D WEAR IT ALL THE TIME IF I COULD.

ROBBIE. YOU'RE HERE TO REDEEM YOURSELF. THAT'S WHAT YOU TOLD THE C.S.A., THAT'S WHAT YOU TOLD ME.

I'M TELLING YOU THAT YOU'RE GOING TO DIE UNLESS YOU SNAP OUT OF THIS, BOY.

IF THAT'S WHAT IT TAKES.

WE'LL BE MEETING LATER. I'LL SEND SOMEONE TO GET YOU.

TRY AND EAT SOMETHING TODAY, WOULD YOU?

I WANT ANOTHER PSYCH EVALUATION ON THE BOY. USE DR. KEITH SAWNEY FROM THE IN-HOUSE SUPPORT STAFF.

SURELY IT'LL BE THE SAME AS THE LAST ONE, SIR. PENANCE'S POWERS DON'T WORK UNLESS HE'S IN PHYSICAL PAIN.

I HAVE PHOTOGRAPHS OF DR. SAWNEY DOING VERY BAD THINGS WITH PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT HIS WIFE. HE'LL WRITE WHATEVER I SAY.

WHICH IS?

THAT THE BOY'S TOO CRAZY FOR FIELD SERVICE AND IS TRYING TO GET HIMSELF KILLED.

I DON'T NEED A HERO ON THIS TEAM. AND I DON'T NEED THE C.S.A. DESCENDING UPON ME WHEN THE BOY DOES FINALLY GET HIMSELF KILLED.

MISTER STRUCKER.

OSBORN. WHERE'S MY NEW BLADE? IS THE HILT PROTECTED?

MY OFFICE.

I DEMAND TO KNOW THE CONDITION OF MY SWORD HILT AND THE REPLACEMENT--

SHUT UP.

I WILL NOT. SOME NOUVEAU-RICHE AMERICAN BUSINESSMAN WITH A SHADY PAST TELL A STRUCKER TO BE QUIET? THAT IS NOT HOW THE WORLD WORKS.

MR. STRUCKER. YOUR FINE ARISTOCRATIC BREEDING HAS LEFT YOU DEFICIENT IN MANY AREAS, NOT LEAST OF WHICH IS MEMORY.

DO YOU RECALL THE DEAL UNDER WHICH YOU REMAIN ON THE TEAM AND UNDER MY DIRECTION?

THAT'S NOT THE--

DO YOU REMEMBER?

...YES.

YES. I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT, IF YOU REALLY REACHED, ANDREAS.

WHEN YOUR SISTER DIED, YOU WRAPPED THE HANDLE OF YOUR SWORD IN HER SKIN. PRESUMABLY SOME PERVERSE STRUCKER TRADITION.

OR MAYBE JUST YOUR OWN WARPED MIND.

MY SPECIAL TALENTS REQUIRE...

YES. YOUR FAMILY TRAIT ONLY ACTIVATES IF THE SIBLINGS ARE TOUCHING EACH OTHER. SO HER SKIN AROUND THE SWORD IN YOUR HAND ALLOWS YOU TO CONTINUE ACCESSING THEM.

I LOVED MY SISTER VERY MUCH.

I'M SURE YOU DID. IN MANY WAYS. AND THAT'S HOW WE STRUCK OUR DEAL, ISN'T IT?

...I'M AWAITING AN UPDATE ON *THAT*, TOO.

THESE THINGS TAKE TIME. DESPITE WHAT YOU MIGHT READ IN THE TABLOIDS, ACCELERATED HUMAN CLONING IS A TRICKY BUSINESS.

I REMAIN CONFIDENT, HOWEVER, THAT BY THE TIME YOU COMPLETE YOUR YEAR IN THE THUNDERBOLTS, AN ADULT CLONE OF YOUR BELOVED SISTER DERIVED FROM THE CELLS IN YOUR SWORD HILT WILL BE RELEASED TO YOU, AND YOU WILL BOTH BE SENT OFF TO DARKEST EUROPE TO LIVE HAPPILY EVER AFTER.

UNLESS YOU SPEAK TO ME IN THAT TONE OF VOICE AGAIN. IN WHICH CASE, I WILL PERSONALLY FLUSH YOUR SISTER DOWN THE TOILET. AM I MAKING MYSELF CLEAR?

YES.

YES, *WHAT?*

YES, SIR.

GET OUT.

ANOTHER ARGUMENT WITH THE DIRECTOR?

YES.

THE WAY THINGS WERE BEFORE...MY SISTER AND I COULD AT LEAST FOCUS ON BUILDING SOME KIND OF LIFE FOR OURSELVES.

NOW? NOW IT'S ALL ABOUT HER LIFE. AND HE CONTROLS THAT.

I DON'T FEEL LIKE I'M A HUMAN ANY MORE.

HE CONSTANTLY THREATENS TO CEASE MY SISTER'S RESTORATION PROCESS.

DELIVERING A BEATING TO THAT IDIOT FLAG WAS THE FIRST TIME I'VE FELT GOOD IN WEEKS.

AND *HIM*, IN THERE! YOU NEVER KNOW WHICH OSBORN YOU'RE GOING TO GET.

I SAW HIM TWO HOURS AGO STANDING IN A CORRIDOR ON HIS OWN AND LAUGHING LIKE A MANIAC.

YES, WELL. HE'S ON QUITE A LOT OF MEDICATION, YOU KNOW.

REALLY?

NORMAN OSBORN IS MASSIVELY BIPOLAR. MEDS KEEP HIM ON AN EVEN KEEL.

I WOULDN'T CALL HIM EVEN TODAY.

NO. I HAPPEN TO KNOW THAT HE COMBINES MEDICATIONS IN AN UNAPPROVED MANNER. ALSO, THAT SOME DAYS HE GETS PLACEBO MEDICATIONS.

HOW COULD THAT HAPPEN?

YOU DIDN'T.

WHEELS WITHIN WHEELS, HERE IN THUNDERBOLT MOUNTAIN, ANDREAS.

HE HAS COVERT CONTROL OVER SOME MEMBERS OF THE SUPPORT STAFF. I HAVE... INFLUENCE OVER OTHERS.

LET'S YOU AND I, ANDREAS, TALK ABOUT WAYS TO ENSURE YOUR SISTER'S RETURN.

BECAUSE IF NORMAN OSBORN GOES CRAZY AND GETS SENT TO THE ASYLUM FOR BRAIN-FRIED VETERAN SUPER-VILLAINS, THE LAST ORDERS HE GIVES WILL CERTAINLY BE COUNTERMANDED.

BUT THE EARLIEST ORDERS--LIKE THE CLONING OF YOUR SISTER--WILL STAND.

PROVIDED, OF COURSE, THAT OTHER PEOPLE DON'T GET IN THE WAY.

SUCH AS?

I'D HATE FOR THE C.S.A. TO PUT A FRIENDLIER FACE IN THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR. SOMEONE WHO, SAY, MIGHT HAVE MORE SYMPATHY WITH SONGBIRD.

SONGBIRD HAS ADVOCATES IN THE C.S.A. SHE HAS FRIENDS AMONG THE REGISTERED SUPERHUMANS. A NEW DIRECTOR MIGHT EASILY PUT HER IN COMMAND OVER ME.

I DON'T SEE HOW WE CAN AFFECT THAT FROM HERE.

NO.

BUT WE CAN KILL SONGBIRD IN THE FIELD.

ARE YOU TRYING TO PUT ME ON A LEASH TOO, MOONSTONE?

IT'S A VERY APPEALING IMAGE, ANDREAS. BUT NO, THAT'S NOT WHAT I WANT.

YOU KNOW WHAT I WANT? I WANT YOU AND YOUR SISTER REUNITED, AND BOTH OF YOU SAFELY OUT OF THE COUNTRY.

AND I'D LIKE TO BE DIRECTOROF THE THUNDERBOLTS.

THE NAVAJO RESERVATION.

TROUBLE.

WHAT'S UP?

ANDY BEAR AND HIS CREW GOT THE CRAP KICKED OUT OF THEM BY THE STEEL SPIDER TONIGHT.

THAT GUY, I SWEAR... SO, WHAT, HE JUST BEAT ON THEM AND LEFT THEM TO CRAWL BACK HERE?

KINDA. DAVY GRIFFIN, THEY HAD TO TAKE TO THE E.R. THEY SAY THE SPIDER JUST ABOUT KICKED THE BLOOD OUT OF HIM.

FOR WHAT? BEAR AND HIS CREW ARE BAD LITTLE DIRTBAGS, GOD KNOWS I KNOW THAT, BUT...

WAY I HEAR IT, ANDY AND THE BOYS GOT TANKED UP AND STARTED LOOKING FOR PEOPLE TO ROLL FOR MORE BEER MONEY.

I DUNNO WHY THEY DON'T JUST STEAL BEER OFF YOU, LIKE I DO.

ANYWAY, THEY WERE APPARENTLY PERSUADING SOME GUY TO GIVE UP SOME LOOSE CHANGE WHEN THE SPIDER DROPPED ON 'EM.

SO HOW IS THIS TROUBLE?

BECAUSE ANDY'S GETTING EVERYONE AROUND GOOD AND RILED UP, AND THEY'VE ALL GOT GUNS. TOMORROW NIGHT THEY'RE GOING TO GO HUNT THE STEEL SPIDER.

YOU'VE GOT TO GO TALK TO THE SPIDER, GET HIM TO COOL HIS ACT DOWN. THEY'RE SAYING DAVY'S ENTIRE HEAD LOOKS LIKE MAC AND CHEESE RUBBED IN A BOX OF TOMATOES.

ME TALK TO HIM?

NO, WAIT. I GET IT. THE SUPER HERO THING. YOU THINK WE'RE ALL IN A CLUB.

JASON, I GOT FAMILY DOWNTOWN, YOU KNOW WHAT I'M SAYING? THERE ARE ENOUGH CRAZIES WITH GUNS DOWN THERE.

THIS TURNS INTO A FREE-FIRE THING BETWEEN CAREER MAGGOTS LIKE ANDY BEAR'S CREW AND AN HONEST-TO-GOD SUPERHUMAN COMBATANT PUTTING DRUNKS INTO SURGERY--

I DON'T *KNOW* THE GUY, STEVE! I CAN'T JUST CALL HIM UP AND SAY, HEY, THIS IS AMERICAN EAGLE, QUIT WITH THE SUPER-STUFF FOR A COUPLE OF WEEKS, THERE'S GONNA BE NAVAJO KILL-TEAMS ALL OVER THE--

LOOK AT THAT THING IN YOUR HANDS, JASON. YOU PUT THAT ON, YOU'RE ONE OF HIS GUYS. HE'LL LISTEN TO YOU.

...DAMMIT.

SO YOU THINK IF I SUIT UP, GET SOME ALTITUDE, STAKE OUT DOWNTOWN AND GRAB THE GUY WHEN HE POPS OUT ON HIS EVENING PATROL...?

I THINK YOU'LL BE SAVING A LOT OF LIVES IF YOU CAN PULL THE STEEL SPIDER OFF THE STREETS.

AND THAT, AS I RECALL, IS WHY YOU GOT INTO THE WHOLE THING IN THE FIRST PLACE.

GET ME A BEER.

THE APARTMENT OF JILLIAN WOODS.

NEXT: WILL WORKAHOLIC SUPER HERO REX RANKIN EVEN NOTICE THAT WIFE SALLY IS DOING THE WILD THING WITH ROMAN, LAST STUD OF LEMURIA? ATOMIC STREET, AFTER THE BREAK --

IS THIS JILLIAN WOODS?

THAT'S RIGHT. HOW CAN I HELP YOU?

MY NAME IS SIKORSKI, AND I'M REPRESENTING ROXXON BLACKRIDGE.

I'M AFRAID I DON'T...

ROXXON HOLDS SEVERAL GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST. ROXXON BLACKRIDGE IS OUR PRIVATE SECURITY DIVISION.

I WAS WONDERING IF I MIGHT OBTAIN AN INTERVIEW WITH YOU IN REGARD TO HAVING YOU JOIN BLACKRIDGE AS A SPECIAL ADVISOR, MISS WOODS.

UM. I DON'T REALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT THIS IS ABOUT, MR. SIKORSKI.

WELL, LET ME PUT IT THIS WAY.

DO YOU GO BY SHADOWOMAN OR SEPULCHRE NOW?

OH.

IS THIS ABOUT REGISTRATION?

IN A MANNER OF SPEAKING.

WELL, YES, LOOK, I KNOW I'M NOT REGISTERED, BUT I HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING IN YEARS, NOT AS A--A--I DON'T KNOW-- MASKED PERSON--

PLEASE. IT'S OKAY. WE'RE NOT WITH THE REGISTRATION ACT PEOPLE. IN FACT, QUITE THE OPPOSITE.

WE'RE LOOKING TO BOLSTER THE RANKS OF SOME OF THE MORE SENSITIVE SECURITY WORK WE DO WITH GIFTED, UNREGISTERED SUPERHUMANS.

YOUR BACKGROUND IS EXTREMELY INTERESTING. I UNDERSTAND YOU'RE BETWEEN JOBS AT THE MOMENT, AND YOU ARE CERTAINLY VERY GIFTED.

MY TEAM AND I CAN BE IN PHOENIX TOMORROW TO MEET YOU FOR AN EXPLORATORY INTERVIEW. NO STRINGS, NO RECORDS, NOTHING.

YOU DIDN'T GET THE JOB AT THE MUSEUM THAT YOU INTERVIEWED FOR TODAY, BY THE WAY. I AM SORRY ABOUT THAT.

I TOOK THE LIBERTY OF CHECKING, TO ENSURE YOU WERE STILL AVAILABLE.

CAN I JUST ASK...SECURITY? WHAT WOULD I BE EXPECTED TO DO?

MOSTLY? WEAR YOUR COSTUME, STAND WHERE THE PROTECTEE CAN SEE YOU, PRODUCE A NON-LETHAL DISPLAY OF YOUR ABILITIES FROM TIME TO TIME SO THE CLIENT KNOWS YOUR POWERS ARE SWITCHED ON.

UNDERSTAND THAT WHILE AMERICAN SUPERHUMANS ARE HIGHLY PRIZED IN PRIVATE SECURITY, MANY CLIENTS ARE...UNCOMFORTABLE WITH THE IDEA OF USING U.S. GOVERNMENT-REGISTERED AND SPONSORED SUPERHUMANS.

TOURS ARE USUALLY FOUR MONTHS ON, FOUR MONTHS OFF. YOU COULD SPEND YOUR DOWNTIME ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD.

AND WHEN YOU CHOOSE TO MOVE ON, WE'LL ARRANGE YOUR REGISTRATION CARD FOR YOU SO THAT YOU CAN RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES.

...I SEE.

LOOK. WE CAN BE IN PHOENIX TOMORROW. LET ME GIVE YOU THE ADDRESS OF OUR OFFICES THERE. WE CAN MEET AND DISCUSS IT FURTHER. WOULD YOU GIVE US SOME TIME?

...YES. YES, I WOULD. HOLD ON.

THE STEEL SPIDER. REAL NAME, OLIVER OSNICK.

ORIGINALLY FROM NEW YORK, NOW RESIDENT IN PHOENIX, ARIZONA.

HE IS, AS YOU MIGHT IMAGINE, SOMETHING OF A FAN OF PETER PARKER'S.

HE WAS BELIEVED TO HAVE RETIRED, BUT IT APPEARS THAT YOUNG PARKER'S SUDDEN ATTACK OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE HAS INDUCED MR. OSNICK TO MAKE A COMEBACK.

MR. OSNICK IS, FRANKLY, NOT ALL THERE. HE STARTED OUT YOUNG ADULTHOOD FASCINATED BY DOCTOR OCTOPUS, OF ALL PEOPLE. HENCE THE PROSTHETIC ARMS.

THESE ARMS HAVE BEEN CAUSING SEVERE STRUCTURAL DAMAGE TO THE BONES OF MANY MINOR CRIMINALS IN THE GREATER PHOENIX AREA OVER THE LAST SEVERAL WEEKS.

MR. OSNICK HAS NO SPECIAL POWERS.

HIS SUIT, HOWEVER, APPEARS TO BE BRISTLING WITH SMALL-ARMS AND NON-LETHAL WEAPONRY. THE ARMS, TOO.

HE IS, IN FACT, EXACTLY WHAT THE PUBLIC IS AFRAID OF: A PASSIONATE, UNTRAINED VIGILANTE COMBATANT WITH THE ABILITY TO DEAL VIOLENCE AND DEATH AT RANDOM.

MR. OSNICK HAS A PATTERN. AN AFTERNOON PATROL AND A LATE-NIGHT PATROL. VERY PREDICTABLE. VERY VULNERABLE.

SO WE GO IN TOMORROW NIGHT?

I'M SORRY, WAS I ASKING A QUESTION?

WE GO IN TOMORROW AFTERNOON. WE TAKE HIM DOWN IN PUBLIC, WITH GOOD LIGHTING FOR THE NEWS CREWS.

YOU WANT US TO TAKE HIM DOWN IN BROAD DAYLIGHT?

YES. I WANT THEM TO SEE.

I WANT THEM ALL TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS TO SPIDER-MAN WHEN HE DEFIES THE NEW ORDER OF THINGS.

I AM THE NEW ORDER OF THINGS. CONTROL OVER ALL SUPER HERO ACTIVITY IS THE NEW ORDER OF THINGS.

SPIDER-MAN NEEDS TO LEARN THAT. WITH A PUBLIC BEATING AND AN EXAMPLE MADE TO ALL HIS LITTLE FRIENDS.

STEEL SPIDER.

YES.

YOU SAID SPIDER-MAN.

NO I DIDN'T. I SAID STEEL SPIDER, MAN.

YOU SAID SPIDER-MAN.

NO. STEEL. SPIDER. STEEL SPIDER. WHY WOULD I SAY SPIDER-MAN?

I DON'T KNOW.

SHUT UP.

WHERE'S BULLSEYE?

HE GETS HIS BRIEFING SEPARATELY.

HE'S EITHER A MEMBER OF THE TEAM OR HE'S NOT.

HE'S NOT. HE'S YOUR SAFETY NET. AND GOD KNOWS YOU NEEDED HIM AGAINST JACK FLAG.

WE ARE *NOT* GOING TO HAVE A REPEAT OF THAT DEBACLE. YOU ARE GOING TO *STUDY* SPIDER-MAN AND DEVISE A BATTLE PLAN THAT DOES *NOT* EMBARRASS ME AGAIN. IS THAT CLEAR?

STEEL SPIDER. YOU ARE GOING TO STUDY STEEL SPIDER.

NOW PAY ATTENTION:

--SPIDER-MAN, WHO UNMASKED DURING THE REGISTRATION DRIVE AS TEACHER PETER PARKER, IS STILL AT LARGE TODAY AFTER--

DON'T WORRY, PETER.

I'M WITH YOU. I'M STILL OUT HERE TOO.

I'M STILL OUT HERE TOO.

FAITH IN MONSTERS part 4

#114

#114

YOUNG GUNS VARIANT

BY CLAYTON CRAIN & RICHARD ISANOVE

PHOENIX, ARIZONA:
JASON STRONGBOW

PHOENIX, ARIZONA:
JILLIAN WOODS

BUS & TAXI ONLY

SAMUEL

PHOENIX, ARIZONA:
OLLIE OSNICK,
THE STEEL SPIDER

WHAT IN THE HELL...?

U.A.V.S...?

NO.

THUNDERBOLTS' CLOUDEYES.

ALL RIGHT. ALL SET.

LET'S GET THIS DONE AND GET HOME.

EXIT

WHAT DO I DO?

I CAN'T FIGHT THE THUNDERBOLTS. THERE'S NO ONE ELSE OPERATING IN THE CITY. IT MUST BE ME THEY'RE COMING FOR...

...BUT PETER PARKER WOULD. WOULDN'T HE? HE'D FIGHT ANYONE WHO WAS WRONG. HE'D FIGHT VENOM. HE FOUGHT VENOM A LOT.

WHAT DO I DO?

HEY.

WHO ARE YOU?

UM... AMERICAN EAGLE.

ARE YOU WITH THEM?

WITH WHO?

THEM! THE THUNDERBOLTS!

HELL, NO. I'M JUST HERE TO TALK WITH YOU.

SEE, YOU'VE BEEN SMACKING AROUND THE CRIMINAL ELEMENT, AND I'M OKAY WITH THAT, BUT YOU'RE ALSO GETTING PEOPLE RILED UP AND ALL READY TO LYNCH YOU.

AND WHEN THAT KIND OF GRIEF SPILLS OVER ONTO MY TURF, I'VE GOT TO COME TALK YOU DOWN A LITTLE BIT, YOU KNOW?

DID *YOU* CALL THE THUNDERBOLTS DOWN ON ME?

HEY, BACK UP. YOU'VE GOT A NEW YORK CITY ACCENT AND I WAS BORN TEN MILES FROM HERE. SO YOU DO *NOT* WANT TO SOUND TOO ENTITLED RIGHT NOW.

I DIDN'T CALL *JACK* DOWN ON YOU. I'M HERE TO TALK TO YOU MAN-TO-MAN AND DEAL WITH THE FACT THAT YOU'VE BEEN PUTTING PEOPLE IN THE HOSPITAL AND NOW THEY WANT TO TURN DOWNTOWN INTO A FREE-FIRE ZONE.

WELL, SOMEONE DID! THAT'S THEM! INCOMING!

FOR WHAT? BECAUSE I HURT SOME CRIMINALS? WHERE THE HELL DO YOU GO EVERY NIGHT THAT YOU DON'T SEE THEM ON THE STREET ATTACKING PEOPLE?

HUH. YEAH, I SEE IT. COMING IN FAST, TOO.

DID YOU SEE WHAT THEY DID TO JACK FLAG? THAT'S WHAT THEY'RE GOING TO DO TO ME.

BECAUSE I'M UNREGISTERED. BECAUSE I'M JUST LIKE PETER PARKER.

SURE YOU ARE.

THEY'RE COMING TO GET YOU BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T SIGN UP--AND GOD KNOWS WHY, YOU'RE JUST ANOTHER CRAZY SPANDEX WHITE BOY--AND BECAUSE YOU'VE GOT A SPIDER DRAWN ON YOU.

ME, I'M HERE BECAUSE... WELL, BECAUSE IT TURNS OUT YOU'RE A MENTAL PATIENT. LOOK AT ME.

LOOK AT ME, YOU STUPID SON OF A-- YOU'RE SENDING GUYS TO THE E.R. FOR PUSHING DRUNKS IN THE STREET.

YOU THINK THAT MATTERS? YOU THINK IT MATTERS NOW?

YOU WANT TO SEE ME DEAD? DEAD AND REPLACED BY SOME GOOD GOVERNMENT WORKER? YEAH?

THAT IS NOT THE--

YES, IT IS! YOU GONNA WATCH WHILE A BUNCH OF CRIMINALS WITH BADGES COME IN HERE AND CRIPPLE OR KILL ME RIGHT IN FRONT OF THE ENTIRE CITY?

WHOSE SIDE ARE YOU ON?

NOT THEIRS.

TEN SECONDS BEFORE THE ZEUS MOVES OUT! GO!

YEAH?

SEVEN.

FOUR.

AAOW!

AAAAAA

AAAAIIII

THOOM

NNAAAAA!

THE BEST SALAD

BOOM

KRRSHH

GET OUTTA THE WAY!

I'M GONNA EAT THAT LITTLE DIRTBAG'S BRAIN AND SQUAT IT OUT ON HIS MOTHER'S GRAVE!

DAMN-- HOW MANY OF YOU PEOPLE ARE GONNA GET UNDERFOOT? GET *AWAY* FROM ME!

I GOT *SUPER HERO* WORK TO DO!

WHAT THE HELL IS *THIS?*

WHAT'S GOING ON?

THAT WOULD BE ME.

YOU PEOPLE--RUN FOR IT. I'LL HOLD VENOM OFF.

GO ON, *RUN!*

I AM REALLY IN A BAD MOOD NOW.

YEAH.

I FIGURED.

DON'T SUPPOSE I COULD BUY YOU A DRINK?

AUUFFF

NGGAAAA

THE THUNDERBOLTS! MORE GREAT ACTION FIGURES ONLY FROM--

SONGBIRD! ASSISTANCE PLEASE!

I'D PUT YOU BETWEEN THE SPIDER AND THE STREET, SO THAT WE'RE AIMING AWAY FROM BYSTANDERS.

ANYWHERE IN PARTICULAR YOU WANT ME TO PUT YOU?

WHAT DO YOU RECOMMEND?

WELL I DON'T SEE MOONLOCKS AROUND TO PLACATE

SO WE SHOULD DO THE THING WE USED TO TEST

WHY NOT.

WHAT ABOUT THE CYNET CHIP?

WE'RE NOT TASKED TO BRING IN ANYONE BUT THE STEEL SPIDER. LET THE POOR GUY RUN.

TOOK A CHUNK OF MEAT WITH IT--WE CAN'T CLOSE THE WOUND UP HERE--

TO HELL WITH THE WOUND! *AAAAA!* STOP *TOUCHING* IT!

CLOAKING TEAM! TAKE BULLSEYE OUT! FIND THE DIRTBAG WITH THE HELMET WHO SHOT ME!

AND CRIPPLE HIM!

DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME TWICE.

LET'S ROLL, BOYS.

GET THIS CRAP AWAY FROM ME!

AAAAAAA

I CAN KILL YOU AND NO ONE'S GONNA CARE LESS!

YEAH?

YEAH?

HEY.
HI.
JUST PASSING THROUGH?
ON MY WAY TO A JOB INTERVIEW, WOULD YOU BELIEVE?
THESE ARE THE THUNDERBOLTS, AREN'T THEY? DIDN'T REALIZE UNTIL AFTER I GOT VENOM AWAY FROM THE CROWDS.
YEAH. CAREFUL OF THE WOMAN WITH THE STREAKED HAIR.
I'D REALLY LIKE TO JUST GET OUT OF HERE RIGHT NOW. YOU?
I'D LIKE TO THINK WE HAD THE CHOICE. THEY'RE HERE TO PICK UP AN UNREGISTERED GUY. THE STEEL SPIDER?
AH. THAT MAKES ME TWICE AS STUPID FOR GETTING INVOLVED, THEN.
WELL, THAT MAKES THREE OF US WITHOUT OUR LITTLE TIN BADGES.

WHICH ALMOST MAKES THIS A FAIR FIGHT.

I BET THEY WEREN'T EXPECTING THAT.

FAITH IN MONSTERS part 5

#115

#115

YOUNG GUNS VARIANT

BY SIMONE BIANCHI & RICHARD ISANOVE

PHOENIX, ARIZONA.

WE ONLY WANT THE STEEL SPIDER.

I WANT TO BITE OFF THEIR HEADS AND SHOVE MY TONGUE DOWN THEIR NECK HOLES.

SO I CAN LICK OUT THEIR HEARTS.

WHY?

I DON'T CARE WHAT BADGES YOU PEOPLE HAVE BEEN GIVEN. YOU COME NEAR ME, AND I'LL HURT YOU LIKE I'D HURT ANY VILLAIN.

THAT PORTABLE NIGHT-THING YOU DO: YOU GOT MORE OF IT LEFT?

I'M A PERMANENT CONDUIT TO THE DARKFORCE. AND YET I CAN'T GET A JOB OR KEEP A GUY. BUSY TONIGHT?

PROVIDED I'M NOT CRIPPLED AND BEING ASSAULTED IN A HOLDING CELL AT THUNDERBOLTS MOUNTAIN, NO. COVER?

CHEN. I'M USING A DIRECTED SOUND BEAM TO SPEAK TO YOU. NO ONE ELSE CAN HEAR.

I NEED A BIG DIVERSION, SOMETHING THAT'LL MEAN NO ONE'S LOOKING AT ME FOR FIVE MINUTES.

BULLSEYE WILL BE IN THE FIELD BY NOW. I'M GOING TO LOCATE HIM WITH SONAR.

I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR THE MOMENT, CHEN. I WON'T HAVE MY TEAM TURNED INTO THIS MONSTROSITY.

PENANCE! EARN YOUR STICKING-PLASTER MONEY AND CLEAR THIS CRAP AWAY!

NO. DO NOT RELY ON THE BOY.

I WILL HANDLE THIS.

AAAAAAAAAA

WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?

AAAAAAAAAA

WHAT WAS THAT?

I SEEM TO HAVE OVERESTIMATED THE SIZE OF MY RADIATION BURST.

HOWEVER, IF YOU CAN APPLY YOUR INCREDIBLE SUPER-POWERS TO THE MIGHTY ACT OF LOOKING IN FRONT OF YOU, YOU'LL SEE I'VE PREPARED THIS WAY FOR YOU.

UUURRRRRR

CAAN'T THIIINK

ELECT ELECTROMAGNETIC RAAAADIATION

URK

URCH

YEAH.

NO.

LOOKS LIKE IT'S ALL HAPPENING DOWN THERE, BOYS.

BACK UP, BULLS. WE NEED TO CLOAK NOW BEFORE WE GET SPOTTED.

LET'S GET THIS AMERICAN EAGLE GUY IN THE BAG, JUST LIKE WE DID JACK FLAG, NICE AND SMOOTH.

YEAH...

BULLSEYE. YOU CAN'T SEE ME, SO DON'T LOOK. DON'T DO ANYTHING. JUST LISTEN.

I'VE DISABLED YOUR NANOCHAIN. RUN. RUN NOW. YOU'RE FREE.

IS THAT RIGHT...?

YEAH. WE NEED TO BAG THE GUY. LIKE *NOW*, BULLSEYE.

RIGHT, RIGHT...

YOU KNOW THE DRILL, BULLS.

YEAH.

DO AS I'M TOLD.

BE A GOOD BOY.

FREE FREE FREE.

BUT BEFORE I GO, I'M GOING TO KILL THIS AMERICAN EAGLE GUY.

JUST BECAUSE I WANT TO.

RRRRRRRRRR

RRRAAAAAAAAA

NNNGGGG

WHAT NOW?

LET THEM HAVE THEIR BIG FIGHT. IT'LL GIVE ME A CHANCE TO WORK OUT WHAT TO DO NEXT. YOU SHOULD GO.

WHAT?

SO SHOULD YOU.

DON'T MISS YOUR JOB INTERVIEW.

DON'T GET KILLED.

AH, HELL.

DON'T MOVE.

SERIOUSLY. STAY CALM. WE'LL FIX THIS.

AAAAUUUUU

YEAH? YOU LIKE THE TASERS? C'MON, SAY IT.

UUUUUUUU

TOO HARD TO THINK? YOU COULDN'T THINK BEFORE YOU CAME OUT TO KILL ME?

WE'RE NOT *ALLOWED* TO KILL YOU, YOU LITTLE JERK.

BUT I CAN DO EVERYTHING *UP TO* KILLING YOU.

SKURCH

NO!

THAT'S WHAT YOU CALL FIXING IT?

GO! GO NOW!

TAKE CARE.

YOU TOO.

STOP THRASHING! I AM TRYING TO CAUTERIZE THE WOUND!

NNAAAAAAA

CHROPP CHROPP

PAH HURRG

RADIOACTIVE MAN TO T-WAGON--I NEED EMERGENCY MEDICAL ASSISTANCE!

PENANCE ARE YOU INJURED?

NOT GOOD ENOUGH.

RUTABEGORZ
Food Teas Espresso

I'M NOT GOOD ENOUGH.

BAM

I'M NOT GOOD ENOUGH.

BAM

I'M NOT GOOD ENOUGH.

I'M NOT GOOD ENOUGH.

BAM

I GOT TAGGED. WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM?

WHAT WAS ALWAYS WRONG WITH HIM.

HE'S A BROKEN TOY, FORCED TO LIVE IN A WORLD HE WAS NEVER MEANT FOR.

CHK

I'VE READ ALL ABOUT YOU, BULLSEYE.

KILLING REGULAR PEOPLE. FIGHTING UNPOWERED OPERATORS LIKE DAREDEVIL.

PICK YOUR TARGETS CAREFULLY, DON'T YOU? LIKE SOME SCHOOLYARD JERK, LOOKING FOR THE LITTLE KIDS TO KICK AROUND.

YOU SPINELESS LITTLE BAG OF CRAP.

AND HERE YOU ARE, IN MY TOWN. AT THE SAME TIME THE THUNDERBOLTS SHOWED UP. FUNNY, THAT.

SO LET'S SEE WHAT YOU'VE GOT. YOU MIGHT DO OKAY WITH THOSE NEW YORK CITY BOYS.

BUT YOU AND ME ARE IN PHOENIX, ARIZONA. SO YOU TAKE A SWING AT A REAL AMERICAN AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS.

YOU DONE?

NOT UNTIL I'M PADDLING IN YOUR BLOOD, LITTLE BOY. C'MON. FIRST SHOT'S FREE.

FIRST SHOT'S ALL I NEED.

SHOW ME.

WHAT HAPPENED... TO THE FIRST SHOT...?

I LIED.
NOW I'M ALL DONE TAKING IT EASY ON YOU. YOU READY?

SWORDSMAN TO MOONSTONE. MOONSTONE, RESPOND.

I'M BUSY BLEEDING. WHAT IS IT? HAVE YOU WRAPPED THINGS UP YET?

BULLSEYE'S KILLED HIS HANDLERS. I CAN'T SEE HIM.

MOONSTONE TO T-WAGON! FIRE BULLEYE'S NANOCHAIN! *NOW!*

AAAA

CRACK

HK
HK
HK

WELL. I REALLY THOUGHT SHE'D TAKE THE INTERVIEW.

I DON'T THINK WE CAN WAIT FOR MS. WOODS ANY LONGER.

KRSH

I'LL TAKE THE JOB.

GET ME OUT OF HERE RIGHT NOW.

WE HAVE A CAR WAITING. SHALL I SEND SOMEONE FOR YOUR THINGS?

JUST GET ME OUT OF THIS COUNTRY.

THERE'S NOTHING HERE I WANT.

PHX

THUNDERBOLTS MOUNTAIN, HOURS LATER.

GIVE ME SOME GOOD NEWS, DOCTOR, PLEASE.

BULLSEYE'S LUCKY TO BE ALIVE.

PROGNOSIS?

HE TOOK SEVERE HEAD TRAUMA AT THE SAME TIME THE NANOCHAIN WAS WORKING. AND THEN HIS ASSAILANT SNAPPED HIS NECK.

RIGHT NOW, HE'S PARALYZED, AND HE'S INCURRED SIGNIFICANT BRAIN INJURY.

PERMANENT?

THE NECK, WE CAN FIX, THANKS TO THE LEVEL OF MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY WE'RE PROVIDED HERE. THEORETICALLY, THE PARALYSIS WILL PASS.

THEORETICALLY?

IT'S THE BRAIN TRAUMA THAT WORRIES ME. BULLSEYE ISN'T SUPERHUMAN CLASS.

THERE'S NOT A LOT OF CASEWORK ON AN ORDINARY MAN BEING SEVERELY BEATEN BY A SUPERHUMAN WHILE BEING SIMULTANEOUSLY ELECTROCUTED AT THE CELLULAR LEVEL.

BUT EVEN IF WE FIX THE NECK, THERE'S NO GUARANTEE HE'LL EVER MOVE AGAIN.

AND WE'RE FINDING COLLATERAL DAMAGE ALREADY. HIS SPEECH CENTER IS GONE, FOR INSTANCE.

HE CAN'T SPEAK.

NOT A WORD. COULD BE PERMANENT.

RIGHT NOW, HE'S TRAPPED INSIDE HIS OWN BODY.

HELL, TO ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES, IN FACT, HE'S TRAPPED INSIDE A ***DEAD*** BODY.

FAITH IN MONSTERS part 6

THE FOLLOWING STORY TAKES PLACE BEFORE THUNDERBOLTS #113

THUNDERBOLTS

DESPERATE MEASURES

INSIDE THUNDERBOLTS MOUNTAIN.

THERE.

AT THIS MOMENT, ROBBIE, YOU LOSE CONTAINMENT ON THE TARGET. YOU EFFECTIVELY JEOPARDIZE YOUR TEAMMATES AND THIS EFFECTIVELY JEOPARDIZES THE MISSION.

YOU MOVE SIX YARDS AWAY FROM YOUR DESIGNATED POSITION. THE TARGET PASSES THROUGH OUR EXPOSED LEFT FLANK AND REGAINS A TACTICAL ADVANTAGE.

SKRITCH SKRITCH

EXACTLY WHAT KIND OF TACTICAL ADVANTAGE CAN YOU GIVE TO SOME FREAK CALLED "GORILLA GIRL," ANYWAY?

I'LL CONCEDE THAT POINT. BUT LET'S NOT CHANGE THE SUBJECT, BOY. SHE KNEW ENOUGH TO PROPEL *YOU* DOWN THREE FLIGHTS OF STAIRS.

AND REMIND ME EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENED FOUR SECONDS LATER?

I KICKED HER HAIRY BUTT.

EXACTLY.

EXACTLY MY POINT. YOU SHATTERED HER JAW IN ELEVEN PLACES. FRACTURED COLLARBONE... MULTIPLE LACERATIONS... QUITE A SHOW OF FORCE.

YOU DID IT BECAUSE YOU *COULD*. AND THAT MAKES ME UNCOMFORTABLE.

THIS PAIN-BASED POWER OF YOURS--YOU DON'T *UNDERSTAND* IT, YET YOU'RE THOROUGHLY *RELIANT* ON IT.

I BROUGHT HER *IN*, DIDN'T I?

THERE'S NO DENYING YOUR POWER. IT'S YOUR *EFFECTIVENESS* I QUESTION. YOU HAVE NO NANITE LEASH SO IT'S HARD TO KEEP YOU ON A *TIGHT* ONE.

I AM IN A RESULTS-ORIENTED BUSINESS, BOY. IF YOU DISOBEY A DIRECT INSTRUCTION YOU'RE GOING TO BE A LIABILITY.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT THIS DEVICE IS?

CAN I GO NOW?

IT ALLOWS ME TO TAP INTO ANY SECURITY CAMERA IN THE WORLD, WHICH HELPS COORDINATE OUR FIELD OPERATIONS. IT'S IRREPLACEABLE--

--A FINELY TUNED INSTRUMENT THAT PERSONALLY COST ME OVER SEVENTEEN MILLION DOLLARS OF MY OWN MONEY. I PERMIT ITS USE WITHIN THIS ORGANIZATION *BECAUSE...?*

BECAUSE I COULD CARE LESS. CAN *I GO* NOW?

BECAUSE I UNDERSTAND THE SACRIFICES REQUIRED TO FULFILL OUR MISSION OBJECTIVES. I ROLL UP MY SLEEVES WHEN NO ONE ELSE WILL. I DO WHATEVER IT TAKES.

TELL ME, BOY: WHAT ARE *YOU* WILLING TO SACRIFICE?

CAN *I GO* NOW?

TAKE A LETTER, MISS THOMPSON: TO THE DIRECTOR OF THE C.S.A.-- "DEAR SIR, ETC. ETC... KINDEST REGARDS, AND SO FORTH.

"UNDER ADVISEMENT OF PROFESSOR REED RICHARDS, YOU HAVE PLACED A PETULANT CHILD ON MY TEAM. I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THIS OBJECTIONABLE LITTLE TOE-RAG REMOVED FORTHWITH--"

THAT'S NOT GOING TO *FLY*, SIR. PENANCE IS WITH US FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE, SHORT OF HIM DYING IN THE FIELD--

THAT'S A THOUGHT. CAN WE *KILL* HIM?

WOULDN'T ADVISE IT, SIR.

THIS ORDER CAME DIRECTLY FROM THE C.S.A. AND SINCE BALDWIN IS TECHNICALLY A VOLUNTEER WITH NO BIOCHEMICAL RESTRAINT, THIS IS CONSIDERED REHABILITATIVE THERAPY.

I TAKE IT YOU DON'T WANT ME TO SEND THE LETTER?

LET'S SEE... NO... NO... NOPE.

NO... NOPE... NOT YET... NO... NOT IN A MILLION YEARS...

NOPE... NOPE... *AHA.*

HOW'S THE WEATHER IN *HOUSTON* AT THIS TIME OF YEAR?

OF COURSE I DON'T.

LET ME SEE THE UPDATED TARGET LIST OF UNREGISTERED SUPERHUMANS.

HOUSTON.

IT'S HOT ENOUGH TO FRY A MONKEY'S BUTT.

THAT'S A QUAINT EXPRESSION, MICKEY.

I'M A QUAINT INDIVIDUAL.

YOU'RE A DRUG-DEALING PIECE OF DIRT.

A *QUAINT*, DRUG-DEALING PIECE OF DIRT. IS THIS GOING TO TAKE LONG?

NOPE.

WELL, THAT'S GOOD, 'CAUSE I NEED TO FIND ME SOMEPLACE WITH AIR-CONDITIONING. I CAN READ MY OWN MIRANDA RIGHTS, IF YOU LIKE. I MEMORIZED 'EM.

WHY NOT?

GO AHEAD. WON'T *HELP*, THOUGH.

I'M NOT A *COP*.

WAITAMINNIT... YOU SAID YOU WAS A COP.

NO... I SAID, "AMERICOP." BIG DIFFERENCE.

WHAT DIFFERENCE?

COPS DON'T EXECUTE DRUG-DEALING PIECES OF DIRT WHO PERSUADE LITTLE CHILDREN TO SELL PCP-LACED BAGS OF WHITE OUT OF A DOWNTOWN CRACK HOUSE.

GREEN TO RED... GREEN TO GREEN?

WAITAMINNIT... I'M NOT EVEN THE ONE YOU WANT. I'M SMALL POTATOES.

IF YOU LET ME GO... I CAN BRING YOU TO THE TOP DOG!

GREEN TO GREEN.

GIVE THIS MESSAGE TO THE TOP DOG FOR ME, WILL YOU?

SOCKIT

THANKS.

IS THERE ANYTHING I CAN DO TO MAKE YOU MORE COMFORTABLE?

DIE IN A CAR CRASH.

WHAT ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT?

GOLF.

INTERESTING.

KILLING YOU WITH A FIVE IRON. TWENTY-SIX DEGREE LOFT, TWO DEGREES UPRIGHT. FADE SLICE UP THROUGH YOUR CAROTID ARTERY, BLOW OUT YOUR SPINAL CORD AT THE CEREBRAL CORTEX.

I COULD PROBABLY DO IT WITH A SIX IRON WITH A LEFT-TO-RIGHT WIND.

NOT A THREE IRON?

TOO MUCH CLUB. I'D LIKE TO HAVE THAT PENCIL. I COULD DO THINGS WITH THAT PENCIL.

MM. HOW ARE YOU GETTING ON WITH YOUR TEAMMATES?

I HATE THEM SO MUCH I DON'T EVEN WANT TO KILL THEM.

WHAT IF YOU COULD? WHICH ONE?

ALL OF THEM.

STARTING WITH? DON'T BE SHY.

HOW FAR DO YOU THINK I COULD PITCH YOUR SEVERED HEAD THROUGH A SUBWAY TRAIN?

I'M GLAD WE HAVE THESE OCCASIONAL SESSIONS, BULLSEYE. IT HELPS ME TAKE THE MEASURE OF YOU.

THESE SESSIONS ARE FOR YOUR BENEFIT, OSBORN, NOT MINE. YOU GET OFF ON THE POWER TRIP.

I THINK YOURS IS A HEALTHY HOSTILITY, AND I'D LIKE TO SEE YOU CHANNEL IT FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE GROUP. I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT HAVING YOU TAKE THE LEAD ON AN UPCOMING MISSION--

THEN I'M NOT THE CRAZIEST PERSON IN THIS ROOM.

CALL IT A TEAM-BUILDING EXERCISE. IT'S GOING TO REQUIRE A VERY SPECIFIC SET OF INSTRUCTIONS THAT I WILL EXPECT YOU TO FOLLOW TO THE LETTER.

THAT DON'T MAKE ME SOUND LIKE MUCH OF A TEAM LEADER.

EVEN SO, YOU'RE THE RIGHT MAN FOR THE JOB. YOU HAVE A UNIQUE SKILL-SET AND AN UNDENIABLE ENTHUSIASM FOR USING IT.

I WANT YOU TO ARREST A COP, AND I HAVE AN OUTRAGEOUS IDEA OF HOW WE'RE GOING TO DO IT, AND HOW WE'RE GOING TO MAKE IT LOOK GOOD.

NOW LISTEN CAREFULLY BECAUSE I THINK YOU'RE GOING TO ENJOY THIS. ARE YOU SITTING COMFORTABLY?

THEN I'LL *BEGIN.*

WHAT'S TAKING HIM SO [illegible] MINUTES LAST ROSE OUR [illegible] WITH THE CHINESE EMBASSY

DIRECTOR OSBORN WILL BE ALONG PRESENTLY, DR. LU. HIS MIDDAY MEETING HAS RUN SLIGHTLY PAST SCHEDULE.

I DON'T CARE IF HE'S DEAD — I'M NOT USED TO WAITING THIS LONG FOR AN AUDIENCE WITH A CRIMINAL —

CALM YOURSELF, DOCTOR. STOP. SMELL THE ROSES.

SOME DAYS ARE BETTER THAN OTHERS.

AH-HEHH... =SNFF=...

...AH-HUHH...

AHAHAHAHAHA!

TARGET'S NAME IS BARTHOLOMEW GALLOWS, FORMERLY OF THE HOUSTON POLICE DEPARTMENT.

ACCORDING TO THE PROFILE, TARGET AT ONE TIME BECAME DISILLUSIONED WITH THE PEDESTRIAN PACE OF THE AMERICAN JUSTICE SYSTEM AND DECIDED TO GO FREELANCE. HE CALLS HIMSELF AMERICOP.

HE CURRENTLY RESIDES IN THE LOWER TWO HUNDREDS OF THE FBI'S MOST WANTED LIST THANKS IN LARGE PART TO HIS PENCHANT FOR MURDERING THE VERY MURDERERS WHO RANK ABOVE HIM.

MOE'S

GIRLS

THIS IS SONGBIRD. I HAVE A CLEAR SHOT DOWN TO TARGET. AWAITING THE GO-AHEAD.

NEGATIVE, SONGBIRD. MAINTAIN SURVEILLANCE.

SWORDSMAN HERE... NO SIGN OF TARGET. MAINTAINING PERIMETER AS INSTRUCTED.

ALL THUNDERBOLTS, PLEASE BE ADVISED: TARGET ENTERING AREA OF OPERATIONS NOW. KEEP YOUR DISTANCES AND MOVE ONLY TO CONTAIN.

I REPEAT: THIS IS A *CONTAINMENT* OPERATION ONLY. DO *NOT* INITIATE CONTACT.

GIVE ME ONE GOOD REASON NOT TO KILL YOU.

WELL, THIS *IS* AWKWARD. MISS THOMPSON...DID WE SEND MOONSTONE THE OPERATION DETAILS MEMO?

CHECKING, SIR. MIGHT BE AN OVERSIGHT.

DON'T YOU "*OVERSIGHT*" ME, YOU SKINNY LITTLE WITCH. THIS WAS DONE ON PURPOSE.

OOH. "MEOW."

BACK IN YOUR CAGE, JAILBIRD.

I LEAD THIS TEAM IN THE FIELD, OSBORN. AND AS MUCH AS I DESPISE THE ROLE, I DOUBLY DESPISE BEING UNDERMINED IN FRONT OF MY OWN PEOPLE--

I CARE ABOUT ***RESULTS***, MOONSTONE. NOT YOUR LITTLE HORMONE-INDUCED HISSY FITS.

YOU'RE SAYING I COULDN'T LEAD THIS MISSION?

YES.

I'VE READ THIS GUY AMERICOP'S PROFILE. WE'RE OUTCLASSED. YOU KNOW IT AND I KNOW IT. YOU'RE SENDING A MANIAC AND AN UNPROVEN MANIAC TO THEIR DEATHS, AND I MAY NEED THEM FOR FUTURE OPERATIONS.

YOU THINK BULLSEYE WILL?

YOU COULDN'T HAVE GONE. YOU WOULDN'T HAVE FOLLOWED ORDERS.

"ONE LIVES IN ETERNAL *HOPE*."

JUST YOU AN' ME, HUH, CHATTY? WE'RE A TEAM. YOU AN' ME.

ONLY I'M TEAM LEADER. YOU GOTTA DO WHAT I SAY. YOU RESPECT ME, RIGHT?

AM I *RIGHT?*

YOU LIKE THE ***WHEELS*** I GOT US, RIGHT? PRETTY SWEET, RIGHT? YOU'RE THINKING, *"HOW'D HE GET US SUCH A SWEET RIDE? AN' HOW'D THEY MAKE IT **INVISIBLE**, AN' STUFF?"*

WELL, IT'S 'CAUSE I'M TEAM LEADER AND I ASKED ***SPECIALLY***. ONLY THEY GOTTA MAKE US INVISIBLE 'CAUSE I'M NOT ALLOWED TO BE SEEN IN PUBLIC.

PLUS, I BET YOU'RE THINKING, *"WE'RE, LIKE, FIFTY **YARDS** AWAY. WHEN DO I GET MY INSTRUCTIONS?"*

OR, LIKE, *"HE'S BULLSEYE. WHEN DOES HE PULL OUT HIS WEAPON?"*

WELL, GUESS WHAT?

THIS *IS* THE WEAPON.

WHAT?

WHAT--?

CRASH

DOOM!K

ATTACK CIGAR

UHF... INITIATE POWER-UP...

BULLSEYE, THIS IS MOONSTONE: PULL BACK! YOU CAN'T GO HEAD-TO-HEAD WITH THIS ONE!

YOU'RE RISKING PUBLIC EXPOSURE UNLESS YOU MOVE UNDER DIRECT COVER. BACK OFF, **NOW!**

SORRY, DARLIN'...*HEHH*... THIS IS MY CALL. ME AN' MISTER CHATTY PREFER THE FULL-FRONTAL APPROACH.

HERE YA GO, DIPSTICK! HERE'S MUD IN YER EYE--

POWER-**UP!**

FZZAK

YOWCH.

NNH... UH... DON'T JUST STAND THERE, CHATTY! *CHARGE* HIM! THAT'S AN *ORDER!*

THUD

THIS IS RADIOACTIVE MAN: MOVING IN TO PROVIDE BACKUP.

NEGATIVE. MAINTAIN PERIMETER.

WE MUST GO IN NOW! THEY'RE GOING TO DIE—

NOT *YET.*

I DON'T CARE WHO YOU ARE. YOU *LOOK* WRONG.

SO YOU'RE DEAD.

YAAAHH!

QUICK! GET BACK IN HERE!

INITIATE: BANSHEE.

COME ON, YOU USELESS &#%*! GET IN HERE NOW! WE GOTTA REGROUP!

EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE

NN-*AGH!*

AAH! GET IT OUT! IT BURNS!

UP

SHUT UP. CALM DOWN.

CRASH!

COME OUT WITH YOUR HANDS RAISED!

MY NAME IS AMERICOP. BE ADVISED: YOU ARE NOW UNDER CARDIAC ARREST!

WHO IS THIS IDIOT?

YOU KNOW... I'M NOT AUTHORIZED TO KILL.

BUT THEY DID SAY I COULD BRING YOU CLOSE.

WHAT HAPPENED THERE? BULLSEYE'S ATTACKING HIS OWN TEAMMATE. PULL THE PLUG!

I BELIEVE PENANCE IS ABOUT TO GIVE US A LESSON IN BIOELECTRICAL DISCHARGE. WATCH AND *LEARN*, TEAM LEADER.

NOTHING PERSONAL, CHATTY.

=UHF!=

WELL... THAT'S NOT STRICTLY *TRUE*, TO BE HONEST--

GGAHH!

KZZT

STOP RIGHT THERE! COME OUT WITH YOUR ARMS BROKEN!

GOOD IDEA.

AAHHH!

KZZT

NGAAAHH!

AHHHH!

THOOM

GKK.

...STOP...

...INITIATE: DISENGAGE...

...HUHH... *HEHH*... THERE YOU GO...

...THAT'S IT...

...FEELS GOOD...

...THAT'S IT...

...FEELS GOOD...

MISS THOMPSON: PLEASE ACTIVATE BULLSEYE'S NANOCHAIN BEFORE HE DOES HIS TEAMMATE A MISCHIEF.

FULL POWER. PLUS, AN ADDITIONAL SEVENTY PERCENT FOR GOOD MEASURE.

KZZAK

SO I PUT IT TO YOU AGAIN, BOY: ARE YOU PREPARED TO DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO COMPLETE YOUR OBJECTIVES?

ARE YOU PREPARED TO MAKE THAT SACRIFICE?

I DIDN'T THINK SO.

IF IT'S ANY CONSOLATION, I'M TOLD THE RESULTANT ENERGY SURGE FROM YOUR BIOELECTRICAL CRISIS BLEW OUT EIGHTY-FIVE PERCENT OF THE TARGET'S SYNAPTIC NERVE ENDINGS.

IT WAS NECESSARY, AND YOU WOULDN'T HAVE VOLUNTEERED. I NEEDED YOU TO USE ALL OF YOUR ACCUMULATED POWER.

YOU'RE WRONG.

HOW SO? WOULD YOU HAVE WILLINGLY SUBJECTED YOURSELF TO THAT ORDEAL?

I MEAN, YOU'RE WRONG ABOUT MY POWER.

THOOM

I ONLY USED UP ABOUT EIGHTY PERCENT OF IT.

STEP OFF, BOY! YOU DON'T KNOW THE MISTAKE YOU'RE ABOUT TO MAKE--

HERE'S ANOTHER MISCALCULATION OF YOURS, MISTER OSBORN: I HAVE NO NANITES IN MY BLOODSTREAM PREVENTING ME FROM KILLING YOU RIGHT NOW.

YOU, ON THE OTHER HAND, ARE SO RESTRAINED--

GIVE THAT BACK!

WHAT DID YOU SAY THIS THING WAS WORTH AGAIN? SEVENTEEN MILLION DOLLARS?

KRAK

...SIXTEEN. AND IF YOU EVER...

...EVER...

KRAK KRAK

...FIFTEEN... FOURTEEN...

...FIVE... FOUR...

KRAK KRAK KRIK

=MPF=

...OOPS... FINGER...

MISTER OSBORN WOULD LIKE A SOLDERING IRON AND SOME DUCT TAPE.

OH, LORD...

...SIR? DIRECTOR OSBORN?

=EHM=... AHH...

TAKE A *MEMO*, MISS THOMPSON.

...UH-HEHH...

...RE: BALDWIN, ROBERT.

"BEGINNING TO SHOW POTENTIAL."

END

THE FOLLOWING STORIES TAKE PLACE BEFORE THUNDERBOLTS #110

A MARVEL COMICS EVENT

CIVIL WAR

CHOOSING SIDES

WHOSE SIDE ARE YOU ON?

SWITCHING SIDES

PORT WASHINGTON, NEW YORK.

IF YOU SQUINT A LITTLE, IT KINDA LOOKS LIKE STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT.

BEFORE IT GOT ALL BLOWN UP, I MEAN.

IN FACT, THIS HOUSE HERE...

IT DOESN'T LOOK ALL THAT DIFFERENT FROM THE ONE NITRO AND HIS BUDDIES WERE HANGING OUT IN BEFORE THE NEW WARRIORS AND THEIR CAMERA CREW SHOWED UP.

BEFORE THE WHOLE AFOREMENTIONED BLOWING-UP THING.

BEFORE THE SUPERHUMAN REGISTRATION ACT.

BEFORE THIS WHOLE $#&% *MESS.*

MY POINT IS, HISTORY COULD BE REPEATING ITSELF HERE.

THAT'S NOT ANYTHING ANYBODY WANTS TO SEE HAPPEN.

ESPECIALLY ME.

UNIT 2, THIS IS UNIT 1.

PERIMETER CLEAR. SUBJECT IN NORTHEAST CORNER.

SITUATION FIVE-BY-FIVE. RECOMMEND "GO" FOR BREACH.

COPY THAT. UNIT 3 IS STANDING BY.

UNIT 2 IS GO FOR BREACH.

MARC GUGGENHEIM WRITER	LEINIL YU ARTIST	DAVE McCAIG COLORIST	VC'S JOE CARAMAGNA LETTERER	MOLLY LAZER EDITOR	TOM BREVOORT EXEC. EDITOR	JOE QUESADA EDITOR IN CHIEF	DAN BUCKLEY PUBLISHER

SURE I'M SURE.

IT'S HAPPENING. TRUST ME.

TONIGHT, OKAY?

I GOT IT ON GOOD AUTHORITY. SO I NEED TO KNOW: ARE WE CLOSED YET?

UH-HUH... UH-HUH...THAT'S GOOD. REAL GOOD. WHAT ABOUT THE BACK END? HOW MANY POINTS?

AND THE RESIDUALS?

FANTASTIC. THAT FOREIGN *AND* DOMESTIC?

FOR THE TV SHOW, I WANT BERLANTI.

BOOK RIGHTS TO MELTZER.

AND FOR THE MOVIE, ZALLIAN OR KOEPP OR GUGGENHEIM.

TK!

NO, THE OTHER GUGGENHEIM. THE ONE WHO WROTE THAT HOCKEY MOVIE.

LOVE THAT FLICK...

TEK

BOOM!

JOEL...

...I'M GONNA HAVE TO CALL YOU BACK.

CAN I HELP YOU GUYS WITH SOMETHING?

MACDONALD GARGAN, YOU ARE UNDER ARREST FOR VIOLATION OF 6 USC-558, A.K.A. THE "*SUPERHUMAN REGISTRATION ACT*" AND THE MURDERS OF ADAM ALBERTSON, ALAN ANDERSON, AVERY BALDWIN, FRED BISMARK...

ANYBODY GOT A BEAD ON THE SYMBIOTE?

...FRED BISZE, DAVID BOLTON...

FILE SAYS IT CAN HIDE ON THE HOST...

YOU GUYS SEEM A BIT CONFUSED.

...LAURA CAAS, JORDAN CAMDEN, MARIA CAMDEN, PETER CAMDEN...

WHY DON'T YOU JUST CHARGE ME WITH THE PHONE BOOK, SAVE SOME TIME?

OR-- BETTER IDEA-- SHOOT YOUR BUDDIES.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING--

!?!?!?!

BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA

IT'S NOT ME! IT'S NOT ME!

SHAM

UHNF!

CH-CUCH

SHAM!

WHAT THE #$%&?!

FILE SAID NOTHING ABOUT MIND-CONTROL...

SO MUCH FOR S.H.I.E.L.D. TRAINING.

SO MUCH FOR BODY ARMOR.

HAVE TO ADMIT...EVEN WITH THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE...

...I THOUGHT THIS'D BE A LITTLE HARDER.

HOW?

I MEAN, HOW DID I--?

THE FILE SAID NOTHING ABOUT MIND-CONTROL...

THAT'S 'CAUSE IT'S NOT MIND-CONTROL...

...IT'S MY CONTROL.

GO AHEAD.

YOU CAN SAY IT.

UNIT 3 GO! UNIT 3 GO!

GOOD BOY. NOW SNAP HIS NECK.

CHUGK!

NICE JOB, BUDDY.

AH, HERE WE GO...

"UNIT 3," I PRESUME.

SONGBIRD...

...AND *RADIOACTIVE MAN.*

COULDN'T THEY HAVE SENT THUNDERBOLTS WITH BETTER NAMES?

I MEAN, "*SONGBIRD*"? LADY, YOU DIDN'T EXACTLY TRADE UP FROM "SCREAMING MIMI."

AND "*RADIOACTIVE MAN*"...WHAT, YOU COULDN'T COME UP WITH ANYTHING MORE ON-THE-NOSE?

WHAT ABOUT "*THE ATOM*" OR "*FIRESTORM*"?

LEGAL REASONS.

ENOUGH, GARGAN.

WE HAVE ORDERS.

WE'RE TAKING YOU IN.

EITHER AS A PRISONER OR A FUTURE THUNDERBOLT, THAT'S UP TO YOU.

PLEASE...PICK "*PRISONER.*"

SORRY TO DISAPPOINT YOU...

...BUT WHY WOULD I?

TEN MILLION BUCKS, A NEW IDENTITY AND A FIRST-CLASS TICKET OUTTA THIS WASHED-UP COUNTRY?

NOT TO MENTION BEIN' A ***CELEBRITY*** FOR A YEAR. I'VE ALREADY SOLD MY LIFE RIGHTS.

MY AGENT SAID THEY'D BE WORTH A LITTLE MORE IF I GOOSED THE BODY COUNT UP A BIT BEFORE I WENT "*LEGIT.*"

BUT WITH THAT TAKEN CARE OF...

(WITH STYLE, I MIGHT ADD.)

...I'VE GOT ONLY ONE QUESTION...

WHERE DO WE SIGN?

LEINIL 106

THE BEGINNING...

CIVIL WAR
THE INITIATIVE

SWITCHING TO CHANNEL INDIGO: OPERATION IN PROGRESS:

LOWER MANHATTAN:

TARGET: HURRICANE (II): INHUMAN RESISTANCE TO DAMAGE/ UNUSUAL TECHNICAL INTELLECT/ DESIGNED OWN "HURRICANE GEAR":

CAREER AS "SUPER HERO": NINE MONTHS, THREE DAYS:

UNREGISTERED SUPERHUMAN VIGILANTE:

TAKEDOWN COMMENCED THREE MINUTES AGO:

GAHAHAHAHAHA

NNNGGGG

VENOM: DISENGAGE.

YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE THROWN ME AWAY--

RADIOACTIVE MAN: ENGAGE TARGET

LET HIM GO. NEXT STEP.

YOU SHOULD HAVE LET ME KILL YOU, STUPID AMERICAN BOY.

PENANCE: COMMENCE SECOND STAGE.

PLEASE. STAND ASIDE. I DON'T WANT TO HURT YOU.

I'M A SUPER HERO.

I WANT YOU TO HURT ME.

JUST GET OUT OF THE WAY --

PAIN IS WHAT ACTIVATES MY POWERS.

AND I'M ALREADY IN PAIN.

PAIN YOU CAN'T IMAGINE.

AND I WANT MORE.

EEEYYAAAAH

TO ROOF

GOT TO GET TO THE ROOF.

GOT TO TAKE OFF.

BULLSEYE! BACK OFF!

THEY WON'T LET ME KILL YOU. NOT THIS TIME.

BUT ONE DAY I'LL BE OUT OF RANGE OF THEIR LITTLE ELECTRIC SHOCK GADGETS.

AND THEN I'LL COME LOOKING FOR YOU AND ALL YOUR BUDDIES.

AND THEN WE'LL HAVE SOME FUN.

YOU KEEP THINKING ABOUT THAT.

TELL YOUR FRIENDS.

OH, GOD, I CAN'T FEEL MY LEGS.

DOESN'T MATTER.

GET TO THE ROOF. GET SOME SPACE.

MOONSTONE TO ALL POINTS. PLAYTIME'S OVER.

IT'S SAD, I KNOW.

SWORDSMAN, BE READY TO CATCH HIM.

AAHHKK

OOPS. I JUST MISSED YOU.

LOSE THE MASK.

PEOPLE LIKE YOU MADE OUR LIVES A MISERY FOR YEARS.

SELF-IMPORTANT DIRTBAGS IN MASKS GETTING IN THE WAY OF WHAT WE WANT.

NOW THE SWORD'S IN THE OTHER HAND.

HEAD OUT THE BACK WAY, BULLS. THE CAMERAS AREN'T SUPPOSED TO SEE YOU --

YEAH, YEAH.

THERE SHOULD BE TWO CREWMEN WITH A CLOAKING DEVICE WAITING AT THE SOUTH EXIT.

EVERYONE ELSE: LET'S GO AND SEE THE NICE TV PEOPLE.

THE COMMISSION ON SUPERHUMAN AFFAIRS' SPECIAL MARSHALS HAVE CAPTURED ANOTHER DANGEROUS UNREGISTERED VIGILANTE --

--BUT THAT'S ALL IN A DAY'S WORK FOR...

...THE THUNDERBOLTS

BEING BAD HAS NEVER BEEN SO GOOD!

The Thunderbolts, a band of reformed villains trying to do good, have always sought justice from America. Their earnest attempts to regain the faith of the American people have only made them slow progress towards that goal, and justice has always been an elusive prize for them. But now, in the aftermath of Marvel's Civil War, the tables have turned: It's time for the Thunderbolts to inflict a little justice on America.

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T+

MARVEL

Collecting *Thunderbolts #110-115*, the *Thunderbolts: Desperate Measures* one-shot, and stories from *Civil War: Choosing Sides* and *The Initiative*.

ZONE